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KATE STONE

(Drawn from a photograph)

BROKENBURN

The Journal of Kate Stone

1861-1868



Edited by

JOHN Q. ANDERSON

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Baton Rouge

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FOR
AMANDA JULIA HOLMES

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Preface

The manuscript of the *Journal of Kate Stone*, now in my possession, exists in two large ledger books into which Kate Stone Holmes copied it, without evident revision, in 1900. The *Journal* contains regular entries dating from May, 1861, to November, 1865, with summary sketches written in 1867 and 1868. The few omissions from the manuscript are indicated by ellipses. The introduction to the *Journal* which Mrs. Holmes wrote at the time she recopied the manuscript is included as "In Retrospect."

The *Journal* is here presented as nearly as possible in the form in which it was written, although certain emendations were made in order to make the text more readable. Spelling was made to conform to modern practice, with the exception of such words as "cosy," "grey," "necessaries," and "eatables" which were retained for their historical flavor. Punctuation was supplied where necessary to present the author's text clearly. Abbreviations, especially frequent in names for which the author often used initials only, were spelled out. Capitalization was modernized, except for important words such as Cause, Government, Nature, and Heaven which the author wished to emphasize. A very few additions of words were made; incomplete sentences, so characteristic of diaries, were completed by addition of subject, verb, or connective when the sense would otherwise not be clear. When the author herself is obviously the subject, no change was made. In a few instances, grammatical structures were altered to avoid misreading. The author's use of plural verbs with collective nouns, such as "the company were," was retained, as well as such colloquialisms as "we all," "ordered off," "foot up," and "have holiday."

Dates of entries were verified and corrected occasionally when the author, often without a calendar, was uncertain.

Proper names, some of which were spelled several ways, were verified by United States Census reports and other records; when such verification was impossible, the most frequent spelling was adopted.

Finally, explanatory notes concerning the military, persons, books, and places were provided in order to present the *Journal* in its proper setting, though these comments are neither exhaustive nor definitive.

I wish to express my appreciation to Miss Amy J. Holmes of Tallulah, Louisiana, daughter of Kate Stone Holmes, for permitting me to prepare her mother's *Journal* for publication. Francis M. Ward and Mrs. Minnie Spann Murphy, local historians of Tallulah, were helpful. My gratitude is deep and abiding to my wife, Loraine Epps Anderson, whose transcription of the manuscript and typing of the copy made this book possible.

J. Q. A.

Table of Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>Introduction</i>	xi
<i>In Retrospect</i>	3
1861: " Our Cause is just "	13
1862: " These troublous times "	77
1863: " Strangers in a strange land "	167
1864: " Disaster and despair "	271
1865: " The darkest hour "	311
1867: " The burden of defeat "	368
1868: " The outlook is brighter "	375
<i>Index</i>	379

Introduction

The *Journal of Kate Stone* vividly records the Civil War experiences of a well-educated, sensitive, patriotic Southern girl who was twenty years old when the war began and who was living with her widowed mother, five brothers, and a young sister at Brokenburn, a large cotton plantation in northeast Louisiana, about thirty miles northwest of Vicksburg, Mississippi. Located in what is now Madison Parish in the floodplain of the Mississippi, Brokenburn lay in the fertile, flat land created by centuries of overflow. Opened to settlement in 1839, the rich land had attracted many planters from Mississippi and the eastern cotton states. The Mississippi and the many navigable bayous provided landings for steamboats to bring in supplies and haul away the cotton.

Throughout the 1840's and 1850's plantations were opened each year by clearing away the dense forest. Since more cotton meant more slaves, great numbers were brought in from the east and from the slave market in New Orleans, where prime field hands brought \$800 to \$1,200, and of the 11,156 people in Madison Parish by 1859, 9,863 were slaves—nine Negroes to every white person. Huge fortunes were made by some planters in a few years; mansions were built and filled with imported furnishings; and many planters made the European grand tour.

Like other planters in the area, Kate's mother, thirty-seven-year-old Amanda Stone, reckoned her large fortune in land, cotton, and slaves. She owned 1,260 acres of the productive black soil and about 150 slaves. She provided a tutor for her children and planned a European tour for 1862.

Against this typical antebellum background the first part of Kate Stone's story takes place. Aware that she was living in a momentous time, Kate began her *Journal* in May, 1861, when many young men from northeast Louisiana, anxious to get in the fight before it was over, were rushing to join

Mississippi companies in Vicksburg, as did Kate's Uncle Bo and her brother William. With a vivid imagination filled with the romances of Sir Walter Scott, "The Prince of Novelists," Kate shared the widespread belief of Southerners that the war would be an outing for dashing young officers in splendid uniforms, inspired to deeds of valor by patriotic maidens. In the following months, she recorded the attitude of the civilians at home in Madison and Carroll parishes, who, anxious as they were for the safety of their soldiers, nevertheless felt that the battles at insignificant towns in Virginia, Tennessee, and Missouri were far away. Even the military reverses of the first year, which Kate avidly followed in the newspapers, did not cool her ardor or convince her that Southern arms could not triumph in "our just Cause," though she had to admit that the war might well last longer than she had anticipated.

Kate's optimism turned to fierce hatred of the enemy when the war moved close to northeast Louisiana in 1862. She reported the fall of the river forts in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri, which left the northern approach to Vicksburg open, and she loathed the sight of the Federal gunboats that appeared in the Mississippi only a few miles from Brokenburn in 1862. At the same time, the southern approach to Vicksburg via the river was opened by the fall of the forts at the mouth of the Mississippi and by the surrender of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Natchez in quick succession, much to Kate's despair. "Fair Louisiana," she cried, "with her fertile fields of cane and cotton, her many bayous and dark old forests, lies powerless at the feet of the enemy."

With the enemy at the door and with the enlisting of her teen-age brothers, Coleman and Walter, Kate's anger struck out on the one hand at the "fireside braves," as she called those who had not volunteered, and on the other at the detested Yankee gunboats which had cut off letters from her soldier brothers and news of the outside world. She was angry, too, at the waste of war when her mother, along with other planters, set fire to their cotton at the request of General Beauregard. Kate saw \$20,000 worth of cotton destroyed at Brokenburn. Moreover, plagued by shortages of staples,

clothing, medicines, and reading matter (a serious shortage for Kate), she listened anxiously to the cannonading at Vicksburg as the Federal gunboats attempted to run the Confederate batteries.

Kate watched with futile rage as the two jaws of the great pincers aimed at cutting the Confederacy in half threatened to close on Vicksburg in the summer of 1862. Federal troops landed in Madison Parish directly opposite Vicksburg, intent on cutting a canal across the peninsula in front of the city which would allow boats to pass out of range of the Confederate batteries; Federal armies in northern Mississippi threatened the city from the rear. Vicksburg seemed doomed to the fate of the other river ports. That fate, however, was miraculously delayed: the canal was a failure; the Confederate ram *Arkansas* briefly menaced the Federal fleet; the Confederate batteries on the Vicksburg bluff could not be silenced; and the land force north of the city failed to move in for the kill. Thus the "Queen City of the Bluff" evaded siege during the summer and fall of 1862.

The respite was brief, however. While Kate was entertaining Confederate officers at Brokenburn on Christmas Eve, General William T. Sherman with 30,000 men arrived at Milliken's Bend, only a few miles away. The small Confederate garrison scattered inland. Then, in January, 1863, General U. S. Grant assumed command of the augmented Federal force which was soon strung out for sixty miles along the western bank of the Mississippi above Vicksburg. While Grant and his Generals devised strategy to bypass Vicksburg, Federal foraging parties swarmed over the Brokenburn neighborhood, confiscating horses and supplies, seizing slaves to work on new canals, and encouraging other Negroes to leave their masters.

The Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department was so depleted of troops by constant transfers to the eastern front that no force was available to oppose the Federal army menacing Vicksburg. Furthermore, all able-bodied Southern men had long since joined the army, and the civilian population was entirely at the mercy of the enemy. On March 15, 1863, Kate voiced the terror of the people:

For the last two days we have been in a quiver of anxiety looking for the Yankees every minute, sitting on the front gallery with our eyes strained in the direction they will come, going to bed late and getting up early so they will not find us asleep.

A few days later they came. On March 22, two Federal soldiers rode into the yard, seized Kate's beautiful horse (which had until that day been hidden in the swamp), and rode away. Two days later she wrote:

The life we are leading now is a miserable, frightened one—living in constant dread of great danger, not knowing what form it may take, and utterly helpless to protect ourselves. It is a painful present and a dark future with the wearing anxiety and suspense about our loved ones.

But worse came. While visiting a neighbor, Kate, Little Sister, and several other women were herded into one room by an armed slave and held at the point of a gun while other Negroes rifled the house. The horror of this incident convinced Kate's mother that the family must flee, though Federal authorities had forbidden the planters to leave.

The flight from Brokenburn was almost as hazardous as the staying, a flight which ended in Texas and which became an exile of two and one-half years. At midnight on a moonless March night, the party of seven—Kate, Mamma, Little Sister, the boys Jimmy and Johnny, Aunt Laura, her four-year-old daughter Beverly, and two servants—set off westward on horseback into the swamp. The country was flooded because the Yankees had cut the levees, and the horses floundered through the dim trails, with Aunt Laura, who had never ridden a horse before, loudly complaining until warned that her noise would bring the Negroes or Yankees down upon them. At daylight they reached a bayou, piled into a frail skiff, and rowed into deep water just as pursuing Federal soldiers appeared on the shore behind them. Crowded into a leaking boat, they rowed through the treacherous bayous with one of the boys and a servant sick with fever.

The bedraggled party finally reached Delhi, Louisiana, a stop on the railroad running west to Monroe, with only the

clothes they had on their backs, having lost all their baggage in the swamp. At Delhi they found the chaos of a fleeing countryside; “. . . everybody and everything,” Kate said, “trying to get on the cars, all fleeing from the Yankees or worse still, the Negroes.” Despite the confusion, the Stones finally got on the train and reached Monroe, eighty miles inland from the Mississippi. There they spent seven weeks before they continued their trek to Texas. To add to their despair, news came of the death of Brother Walter in Mississippi two months earlier.

Meanwhile, the Federal army on the Mississippi was busy attempting to cut canals from the river into the network of bayous running roughly parallel to the river, in order to bypass the batteries on the Vicksburg bluff. By April, however, General Grant was convinced that the projected canals were not feasible, and he ordered the army south across Madison Parish to a point below Vicksburg. After crossing the Mississippi, the army swept over town after town, including Jackson, the capital, and moved up behind Vicksburg to begin the long-threatened siege. The Confederate garrison stood off the Federal force for approximately fifty days, existing in the last days of the siege on pea meal and mule meat. Finally, Vicksburg surrendered on July 4, 1863, leaving the entire Mississippi River in Federal hands. The terrible price of that victory is still evident in the more than 16,000 graves in the Vicksburg National Cemetery.

Though the Federal army moved east of the Mississippi in April, the Brokenburn neighborhood was not free of the enemy. The force which Grant left behind to maintain hospitals and convalescent camps continued unmolested until June, 1863, when Confederate General John G. Walker's Division, moving up from central Louisiana, surprised the white and Negro troops at Milliken's Bend and inflicted heavy losses. Grant promptly reinforced the garrison at Milliken's Bend and the Confederates withdrew inland. Madison Parish remained almost entirely in Federal hands until the end of the war, despite sporadic guerrilla opposition.

The second part of Kate Stone's story takes place in Texas. After a trying journey of several weeks in a rickety "Jersey" wagon, the Stones, less Aunt Laura and Beverly who returned to Vicksburg from Monroe, arrived in July, 1863, in Lamar County, to which Mrs. Stone had sent her overseer and 130 slaves a few weeks before. The primitive log cabins, unshaven men, hoop-skirted but barefooted women of Lamar County convinced Kate that they had indeed reached "the dark corner of the Confederacy." With the acrimony of a modern critic of the state, she noted, "There must be something in the air of Texas fatal to beauty." The sparsely settled area, bordering on Indian Territory, seemed hardly safer than the plantation from which they had fled. Worst of all, however, were the Union sympathizers and some natives who called the numerous Louisiana refugees "renegades." Kate exclaimed that she would not die in Texas because she could not think of being buried in such unfriendly soil.

To add to the burden of these annoyances, news finally reached her of the fall of Vicksburg—and on the Fourth of July at that. Even heavier to bear was the long-delayed report of Brother Coley's death in Clinton, Mississippi, the second brother to die for the Cause. After that, Kate, always so eager for news, hated receiving letters since they almost invariably brought tidings of the death of relatives or friends.

Late in 1863 the Stones moved to Tyler, which Kate found more "civilized" than Lamar County. Again the detested Yankees were nearby—but securely held as prisoners in the stockade at Camp Ford, a few miles from town. Kate, quite naturally, could not keep from gloating, though she almost as frequently sympathized with their wretchedness. The refuge in Tyler seemed threatened, however, in the spring of 1864 when a large Federal force under General N. P. Banks moved up the Red River, intent on capturing Shreveport, headquarters of the Trans-Mississippi Department, and Marshall, Texas, an important administrative and supply center. Confederate troops under General Richard Taylor ended such Federal hopes at the battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill, Louisiana, in April, and eventually forced the enemy to

retreat to the Mississippi. Kate became almost hysterical with praise of Southern strategy as she saw the blue-coated prisoners swell the overcrowded stockade at Camp Ford.

The large number of Louisiana refugees in the Tyler area, including the old neighbors, the Savages and the Carsons, made daily life—and Texas—more endurable. Refugees, army officers, government officials, and local citizens gathered at Mrs. Stone's hospitable house and amused themselves with amateur theatricals while the war dragged into the disastrous spring of 1865. Kate compared the group to the aristocrats of France during the last days of the Revolution; "Monday," she wrote, "it was distressing to see the gloom on every face . . . all seemed in the depth of despair, could think and talk of nothing but defeat and disaster." The crushing news of Lee's surrender had at last reached Texas, but the hope of a last stand west of the Mississippi glowed briefly. Kate refused to think of defeat, but at times she despaired:

Conquered, Submission, Subjugation are words that burn into my heart, and yet I feel that we are doomed to know them in all their bitterness. . . . And Nature smiles down on all this wretchedness.

The eventual confirmation of Lee's surrender, the final and irrevocable acceptance of defeat, the chaotic aftermath of robbing, pillaging, and murder in the death pangs of the Confederacy—all these find despairing utterance in Kate's *Journal* in April and May of 1865.

There was but one bright spot in the darkness—Lt. Henry Bry Holmes, who had called on her every day for three months but who had not yet sufficiently "reformed" to become her husband, drove away to Louisiana with a "token," a geranium leaf, the mate of which Kate kept. The token proved a magic charm, for they were married eventually.

Though the Cause was lost and though the handsome lieutenant was gone, life had to go on, even under the detested "Yankee masters." Admitting that the last year in Texas had been the most pleasant in her life, Kate returned to Louisiana with her family in the fall of 1865. Headed by the

dauntless Amanda and Brother William (who was in Lee's army at the surrender), the cavalcade included all the freed Negroes who wished to go, as most of them did. The fertile fields of Brokenburn they found overflowed and rank with weeds; there followed two years of struggle against overflow, cotton worms, crop failure, a new and expensive Negro labor system, and no money. Kate's experience with death and disaster had prepared her for such emergencies, and the *Journal* ends, a year before she married Henry Bry Holmes, on a realistic but not unhopeful note.

Out of the *Journal* there emerges a picture of Kate Stone, who described herself thus, "I am tall, not quite five feet six, a shy, quiet manner, and talk but little." Stating once that she considered herself ugly, Kate nevertheless had a mind that made up for her fancied lack of physical beauty. She was an avid and critical reader. Of the more than thirty authors mentioned, her favorites were Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott. She was almost reconciled to Texas when she was able to obtain a volume of Shakespeare—at fourteen dollars. She also read Jeremy Taylor, Charles Lamb, Victor Hugo, Bulwer-Lytton, Thackeray, Tennyson, Poe, and Hawthorne. When other reading matter was not available, she turned to magazines and such popular novelists as Wilkie Collins, Mary Jane Holmes, Elizabeth Braddon, and Rhoda Broughton.

She had a sense of humor that sometimes sparkled in her characterization of people. She was both annoyed and amused by the contrast between people of her own class and the frontiersmen in Texas. In graphic detail, she pictured dress and manners at backwoods protracted meetings. Almost fanatically patriotic, she was impatient with those less zealous for the Cause, and the collapse of the Confederacy was to her a personal blow. The personality of Kate Stone matured in the crucible of war, but it did not lose its basic idealistic, religious, and sensitive characteristics.

Kate Stone's impulse to write down important events for posterity led her, as it does most diarists, to record a great deal besides. Her accounts of life in the Brokenburn neighbor-

hood and later in Texas add significant details to the social history of prewar Southern society, and reveal a way of life that is no more. Her remarks on clothing, feeding, and providing medical care for the slaves, and on plantation management are important information for the student of plantation economy. Her record of books read and discussed with her friends is of interest to the literary historian. Her comments on military operations, especially those in the Vicksburg area, contribute to the knowledge of that important campaign.

But more important than all these is the human element in this unusual personal record, for Kate's interest in people enabled her to characterize deftly the people she knew intimately, such as the matchmaking Mrs. Savage and the mercurial Mrs. Carson. Mrs. Carson will not compromise with war and will go out driving in her carriage in Tyler as she had always done at home. Mrs. Savage goes right on with her matchmaking, merely changing pawns from eligible young planters to eligible young officers, and from crinoline-clad belles to young ladies in made-over dresses. A host of most interesting individuals appear and reappear in the *Journal* so that one comes to know them well.

The *Journal of Kate Stone* is, therefore, an epitome of the romance, reality, and tragedy of America's most dramatic conflict. It records the rosy optimism in the beginning; the dogged determination as war brought shortages, defeat, and death; the hazardous flight of women and children before invading armies and their plight as refugees; the death struggle of the Confederacy; the bitter acknowledgement of defeat and the return to a devastated homeland; and finally the struggle against poverty after the war.

Above all, the *Journal* reveals the resentment of an admirable young woman of the ancient dictum that woman's part in war is to watch and wait, her discovery of love amid the ruins of her country, and finally her acceptance of the defeat without cynicism.

Of the many people mentioned in the *Journal*, those members of the family and intimate friends who appear most frequently include:

AMANDA SUSAN RAGAN STONE ("Mamma"), daughter of John Ragan ("Other Pa") and widow of William Patrick Stone, who died December 6, 1855, at Stonington Plantation, Delta, Louisiana. Amanda, thirty-seven in 1861, was the mother of ten children, three of whom had died before 1861. She died in Tallulah, Louisiana, in 1892.

WILLIAM R. STONE ("My Brother"), twenty-one in 1861, enlisted in the Jeff Davis Guards, Vicksburg, May, 1861; served with the Army of Virginia throughout the war and was twice wounded; paroled with the rank of captain in 1865. He died at Omega, Louisiana, about 1882, leaving a wife and one son.

COLEMAN STONE ("Brother Coley"), seventeen in 1861, joined the 28th Mississippi in March, 1862; died from injuries received in line of duty at Clinton, Mississippi, September, 1863.

WALTER STONE ("Brother Walter"), sixteen in 1861, joined the 28th Mississippi in September, 1862; died of fever at Cotton Gin, Mississippi, in May, 1863.

JAMES A. STONE ("Jimmy"), fourteen in 1861, joined Harrison's Brigade in Monroe, Louisiana, in August, 1864; died of yellow fever in Tallulah in 1905, leaving three children.

JOHN B. STONE ("Johnny"), thirteen in 1861; practiced law in Tallulah and died there in 1930.

AMANDA REBECCA STONE ("Little Sister"), eleven in 1861; never married and died in Tallulah in 1934.

BOHANAN RAGAN ("Uncle Bo"), Mrs. Stone's brother who lived with the Stones; about twenty-two in 1861; enlisted in the Volunteer Southrons [*sic*], Vicksburg, May, 1861; served in Virginia throughout the war.

ASHBURN RAGAN, Mrs. Stone's youngest brother who also lived with the Stones; at eighteen died of fever at Brokenburn in 1861.

ALBERT B. NEWTON, native of Mississippi, tutor to the Stone children.

LAURA RAGAN BUCKNER ("Aunt Laura"), Mrs. Stone's sister; wife of Dr. Beverly Buckner, owner of a drugstore in

Vicksburg and of Winn Forest Plantation near Brokenburn, captain in the 28th Mississippi. Their daughter Beverly died in 1864 at about four years of age. Aunt Laura died at Bladen Springs, Alabama, in 1864.

SARAH RAGAN MILLER ("Aunt Sarah"), Mrs. Stone's sister, wife of Capt. Horace Miller, lawyer of Vicksburg. Their children, Horace and Jesse, died during the war.

COUSINS TITIA AND JENNY AUSTIN, Mrs. Stone's nieces, about Kate's age, lived in Memphis.

JOHN RAGAN ("Uncle Johnny"), Mrs. Stone's oldest brother, newspaper editor in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, in 1861.

CARSON, James G., planter and physician, and his wife, Catherine B., parents of Joseph, William, Jimmy, Edward, and Katie.

SAVAGE, Mrs. Elizabeth, owner of Salem Plantation, whose family included Anna B. Dobbs, Emily and Robert Norris, Anna Nicholson, Charles Dobbs, young minister, and Albert A. Kaiser (variously spelled as Kiser, Kayson, and Kaysor), Hungarian refugee, tutor to the children.

HARDISON, Benjamin and Mary, parents of George, Henry, Benjamin, Laura, Julia, Zacheniah, and Lou.

VALENTINE, Mark, Sr., widower, owner of Oasis Plantation, and his son, Mark, Jr.

AMIS, Mrs. Henrietta, widow, mother of Emmett and Annie, owner of Fortune's Fork Plantation, near Richmond, Louisiana.

And finally, SARAH KATHERINE STONE ("Kate") twenty years old in 1861, was born at Mississippi Springs, Hinds County, Mississippi, January 8, 1841. Before 1855 she moved with her parents to Stonington Plantation near Delta, Louisiana. She married Henry Bry Holmes (Lt. Holmes of the *Journal*) at Walton Bend Plantation, home of her brother William, near Yazoo City, Mississippi, December 8, 1869. To them were born four children—Emmet, who died in 1878; William, once district attorney in Tallulah, who died in 1944; and twins, Kate Bry, who died in infancy, and

Amanda Julia, who now lives in Tallulah. Kate Stone Holmes was a leader in the civic, social, cultural, and religious life of Tallulah for many years. She was the founder of the Madison Infantry Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, aided in the organization of the Madison Parish Book Club, and was instrumental in having a Confederate memorial erected on the courthouse square in Tallulah. She died December 28, 1907, in Tallulah, one of the town's most esteemed citizens.

JOHN Q. ANDERSON

Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College
January, 1955

BROKENBURN

The Journal of Kate Stone

1861-1868



In Retrospect

In looking over the yellowing pages and faded writing of my old diary written in the troubled years from 1861 to 1865, how the old life comes back, the gay, busy life of the plantation at Brokenburn with Mamma, a beautiful, brilliant woman of thirty-seven at the head of it all. Having been left a widow six years before with eight children and a heavily involved estate, she had managed so well that she was now the owner of a handsome property on which the crop of 1861 would pay off the last indebtedness. What a large houseful we were! Brother Will, a young man of twenty, had left school two years before, tired of college life and anxious to take charge of the place then just bought. I, fifteen months younger, had graduated at Dr. Elliott's Academy in Nashville and was of course the much indulged young lady of the house. The other children were being fitted for college at home under the care of a tutor to whom they were much devoted. Mr. Newton had been with us for two years, and we imagined would be with us until the last of the five boys was ready for school. Brother Coley and Ashburn Ragan, Mamma's young brother who lived with us—boys about the same age—expected to enter the University of Virginia in the fall and were studying hard to be able to enter the junior class. Living with us also, was Mamma's older brother, Bo[hanaan] Ragan, the happiest, most carefree young man in three states—gay, rollicking, fond of pleasure, generous to a fault, without a care in the world. On the death of his mother a few years before when the old homestead had been sold, he had come to live with us, putting all his property in Mamma's hands and not allowing any settlement at the close of the year, only asking that his bills be paid. Fortunately, the price of his Negroes brought in plenty for his spending and the giving of many handsome gifts. Never a girl had a more generous, loving uncle than he had been to me. Last of all

was Little Sister, a child of nine, the pet and plaything of the house. And coming and going all the time were the friends and relatives, for the people of those times were a sociable folk and the ties of kindness were closely drawn.

There were usually girls visiting me and young men visiting my brothers; and as we lived in a populous neighborhood, for the swamp, there was always something going on—formal dining, informal “spend the days,” evening parties, riding frolics—and in the grey of the morning great squads of hunters starting out with their packs of hounds baying, blowing of horns, and stamping and racing of horses.

Brokenburn was a newly opened place when Mamma bought it. There were some cabins but no residence, but a sawmill had soon been built in connection with the gin, lumber sawed, and cabins and house went up in rapid order. The house, a long, eight-room affair with long galleries and two halls, was expected to be only a temporary shelter until the place should be well cleared and in good working order; then would be built in the large grove of native water oak, sweet gum, and sycamore, a house that would be a pride and pleasure to us all.

Looking out from the side gallery across the wide grassy yard through the trees and wild vines that had been spared when the place was cleared for building, one could see the two long rows of cabins facing each other across a broad sweep of thick Bermuda grass, set with an occasional great tree, grey in the winter with long festoons of moss. Leading from each door was a little, crooked white path, ending at the road down the middle of the grass plot, beaten smooth by the march of the many black feet that journeyed over it in the early dawn, the weary, hot noonday, and the welcome dusk. Loth to go out in the sunrise for the weary hours of plowing, hoeing, clearing land, and long days of cotton picking in the lovely fall weather, the Negroes really seemed to like the cotton picking best of all. Nearly every picker would be racing with some other rival or friend, and at the great windup there were generally prizes for those who headed the list—money for the men and gay dresses for the women. It was no uncommon thing for the “boss pickers”

to pick five or six hundred pounds each day for maybe a week at a time. (Now, in these times of leisure and ease, two hundred pounds is considered good work.)

Facing the cabins in a grove of trees was the overseer's four-room log house, rough but substantial. Many an occupant for it came and went. Some were too severe on the Negroes; others allowed them to idle away the time, the crop suffering in consequence; some were dishonest and lazy. Altogether it was a difficult position to fill satisfactorily. The men were a coarse, uncultivated class, knowing little more than to read and write; brutified by their employment, they were considered by the South but little better than the Negroes they managed. Neither they nor their families were ever invited to any of the entertainments given by the planters, except some large function, such as a wedding given at the home of the employer. If they came, they did not expect to be introduced to the guests but were expected to amuse themselves watching the crowd. They visited only among themselves, except an occasional call of the wife and children on the family of the employer. The overseer ranked just above the Negro trader, whose work was considered the very lowest and most degrading a white man could undertake, and the stigma clung for generations, notwithstanding the money the traders usually accumulated.

Of course in case of sickness at the overseer's, the lady at the great house saw that they were not neglected and that they were well waited on. There was always a woman furnished to wait on the overseer's family, and if he had many children, a half-grown girl was furnished to nurse. There were often the kindest relations existing between the two families until the overseer would leave or be discharged; then they would drop entirely out of each other's lives.

I cannot recall an instance when a lady on one place called on the overseer's wife of another planter. Then, it seemed a very natural custom, but looking back it seems an odd state of affairs.

The cookhouse and the stables with the great, roughly-built barns stood in easy reach of the overseer's house, so that, standing on his front gallery, he could see what was

going on in the "quarter lot." But he was expected to be most of the day on his horse in the field watching the hands. He was responsible for all that went on: he must see that the two old Mammys in the nursery, a great big room with a fireplace at each end and two rows of cradles, took good care of the little darkies—fed them and kept them decently clean; and he must see that the women at the cookhouse kept it clean and that the food was well cooked and abundant. Sometimes when the hands were in a remote part of the field, the dinner would be sent them at 12 o'clock. As I remember, the Negroes were expected to cook their own suppers and breakfasts, but each plantation was a law unto itself and customs varied. The rations were meat and meal, and there was a large garden to furnish vegetables for the dinner. Most of the Negroes had little gardens back of their houses, and it was a very lazy "cullud pusson" who did not raise chickens and have eggs.

The overseer had to see that the mules were well looked after, curried, fed, and watered; that the milkwoman did her duty by the cows; and that the stockman gave his best care to the hogs, calling them up at night and penning them away from the wolves or other varmints. For on this new place, stretching back into a cypress swamp that extended miles away, the wolves were still at home; and sitting on the back gallery in the late evenings, we would often hear them howling in the canebreak. And there was still an occasional bear to be killed by the hunters. Then there was the gin and sawmill work to be directed; so you will see that the manager earned his salary, varying from \$800 to \$1,200 as he was efficient or otherwise.

There were about one hundred and fifty Negroes on the place, "big and little," as we used to say, and the feeding and clothing was no light job. They were furnished only two or three suits a year, with a calico or linsey dress, head handkerchiefs, and gingham aprons at Christmas for the women, with presents of some kind for the men, and with tobacco and a drink all around. A few pounds of flour, sugar, and coffee were given to each grownup and always beeves, hogs, and material for a big Christmas supper, and a holiday

of two or three days or a week was granted if the plantation work was not pressing.

The clothes for the men and boys and for many of the women who could not sew, were cut and made by seamstresses on the place under the supervision of the master's, or occasionally of the overseer's, wife. I used to be sorry for Mamma in the spring and fall when the time would come to have everything cut out; a room would be cleared out and the great bolts of white woolen jeans, Osnabergs, and linseys, with bolt after bolt of red flannel for the little ones, would be rolled in and the women with great shears would commence their work. There were several sets of patterns with individual ones for the very tall and the very fat, but there was not much attention paid to the fit, I fancy.

Usually Mamma would lay a pattern on several layers of the goods, chalk it around, and a woman would cut it out. After a day or so of this work, Mamma would go to bed quite broken down and Aunt Lucy, the colored housekeeper, would finish the superintending.

The style of goods used then must have gone out with slavery. I have not seen any of that white jeans for years and years. It would last for years and years and after many washings become as soft as flannel. The Negroes often dyed the white suits tan or grey with willow bark or sweet gum. And those heavy russet shoes that all clumped about in, the old and the young, men and women—whoever sees them now? And a good riddance, for they were oh! so ugly and must have been excessively uncomfortable—about as pliable as wood. After many, many greasings, the poor darkies could at last bend their feet in them.

I was born and raised in the South (and to this day I have never been north of Mason and Dixon's line) as were all of my relations before me as far back as we can recall them, six generations of lawyers, doctors, civil engineers, but generally planters. Yet with this unmixed Southern blood from generation after generation of slaveholders, my first recollection is of pity for the Negroes and desire to help them. Even under the best owners, it was a hard, hard life: to toil six days out of seven, week after week, month after month, year after

year, as long as life lasted; to be absolutely under the control of someone until the last breath was drawn; to win but the bare necessities of life, no hope of more, no matter how hard the work, how long the toil; and to know that nothing could change your lot. Obedience, revolt, submission, prayers—all were in vain. Waking sometimes in the night as I grew older and thinking it all over, I would grow sick with the misery of it all.

As far as Mamma could, the Negroes on our place were protected from cruelty and were well cared for; they were generally given Saturday evening and had plenty to eat and comfortable clothes. Still there were abuses impossible to prevent. And constantly there were tales circulated of cruelties on neighboring plantations, tales that would make one's blood run cold. And yet we were powerless to help. Always I felt the moral guilt of it, felt how impossible it must be for an owner of slaves to win his way into Heaven. Born and raised as we were, what would be our measure of responsibility?

Although the war swept from us everything and life since '65 has been a long struggle for the necessities of life, I have never regretted the freeing of the Negroes. The great load of accountability was lifted, and we could save our souls alive. God would not require the souls of the Negroes at our hands. Everyone would give account of himself to God. . . .

It required quite a corps of servants to keep us well waited on at Brokenburn, for no one expected to wait on himself. The most important was Aunt Lucy, the housekeeper, a nice-looking, middle-aged griffe¹ woman, who waited on Mamma and superintended the others and was expected to see that all household affairs moved smoothly. Annie, the cook, was thin and dark. Her office was certainly no sinecure, as there

¹ Frederick Law Olmsted, who traveled extensively through the South in the 1850's, gave these classifications, as designated by the French in New Orleans, "according to the greater or less predominance of negro blood:—Sacatra, griffe and negress; Griffe, negro and mulatto; Marabon, mulatto and griffe; Mulatto, white and negro. . . ."—*The Cotton Kingdom; A Traveller's Observations on Cotton and Slavery in the American Slave States*, ed. Arthur M. Schlesinger (New York, 1953), 228.

were always from thirteen to maybe twenty white people and all the house servants to cook three abundant warm meals for every day with no scant cold tea at night but perhaps the most generous meal of the day. I wonder now how the cooks of those days got through with it all. Nearly every week there was a large dining, and often entertainments in the evening with elaborate suppers. It is true that the mistress or daughter of the house and Aunt Lucy always helped with the desserts and the fancy dishes. Thinking it over by the light of later experience, I know our cook was a hard-worked creature. Then, we never thought about it.

Also, there was the seamstress, only next in importance to the cook, and always with piles of work ahead. In those days there were no ready-made clothes for women or children and not many for men, otherwise than pants, vests, and coats. The handsome dresses were made by city dressmakers and everything else made at home. Sewing machines were just coming in and were easily put out of order, and so few Negro seamstresses could use them. They were good only for the mistress of the house and she was usually too busy to bother with them. Aunt Lucy in her spare time was expected to help the seamstress, and my maid, Frank, "Francesca Carrorra" to give her full name, was also learning to sew. But as Frank was said by all the Negroes to be the "most wofless girl" on the place, she was not making much progress. She certainly was lazy. A bright yellow mulatto, just the color of a pumpkin, with straight black hair and intensive black eyes, she was odd to look at and so unreliable at any kind of work that she was a trial to everybody. She had been mine since we were little children together (she was two years younger), and I could not bear to have her punished. So she dawdled along, doing as little as she could.

The washwoman, Emma, lived in a house in the corner of the yard with Harriet, and her job, to keep the whole family in clean clothes, necessitated an assistant most of the time. And they were busy all the week. People did not have as many clothes in those days and they must needs be washed oftener.

Webster, a griffe Negro, was the dining room servant and some times the coachman, though if he was very busy Uncle Tom from the quarter would drive. To help Webster was a half-grown little darkie, Charles, to rub the knives, do errands, help clean the boots. There were seven pairs and generally several more belonging to the visitors, and boots were boots, reaching to the knee if for hunting or tramping—not many men wore shoes.

Uncle Hoccles (Hercules? I suppose), a native African, had been brought over after he was full grown and was now quite an old man who looked wonderfully like a gorilla. The boys were just reading Du Chaillu's *Adventures in Africa*,² and they used to point out to each other the many points of similarity between Uncle Hoccles and the gorillas pictured in the book. Uncle Hoccles was the gardener and a most faithful old fellow—low, heavy built, with long arms, and as black as tar. He spoke a most curious lingo that only those accustomed to him could understand. He had entire charge of the garden and could not bear for the overseer to come in to give him directions. He quite loved for Mamma and the children to come in and admire the splendid vegetables and the beautiful order, but he never troubled to obey Mamma's orders, unless they agreed with his ideas of what was necessary. He gathered the vegetables and there was a standing feud between him and the cook; she would slip in and get something he wished to keep for next day.

The last of the household was a slim, brown child of ten, Sarah, whose province was to stand or sit on a low footstool just behind Mamma's chair, to run errands and carry messages all day long, and to pick up the threads and scraps off the carpet. She never spoke unless spoken to and stood like a bronze statue.

Each of the boys owned a little darkie in the quarter who

² Paul Belloni Du Chaillu, born in Louisiana in 1835, spent his early life in Africa. Between 1855 and 1859 he traveled extensively in the Gaboon country. Returning to the United States in 1859, he published in 1861 *Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa; with Accounts of the Manners and Customs of the People and of the Chase of the Gorilla, Leopard, Elephant, Hippopotamus, and Other Animals*. He subsequently published many books for juveniles.

would eventually become his body servant when the owner should arrive at the dignity of manhood.

There were ponies for the younger children and horses for the big boys. My Brother Will and I each owned a beautiful horse, fast and spirited, and many were the wild, dashing rides we enjoyed in company, little and big, all riding together. Mamma did not like riding on horseback, but she had nice carriage horses and they did not grow fat from idleness. They had to be renewed more frequently than any stock on the place because they would so frequently founder.

And this was our household, overflowing with life and gay with happiness and hope, when I commenced my journal in 1861. How I wish I could write well so that this old life could live in the imagination of my children, but I never had the gift of expression with my pen.

Brokenburn, with twelve hundred and sixty acres, about eight hundred cleared and deadened, was a most fertile place, new and productive. The Negroes seemed as much ours as the land they lived on. The crop of 1861 would pay off all indebtedness, leaving a surplus, and hereafter we would have nothing to do but enjoy ourselves. Mamma, My Brother, and I were to make the Northern tour in the summer, leaving Sister with Aunt Laura and the boys at home under Mr. Newton's care. Then the next year we would go sight-seeing in Europe, taking Little Sister and leaving two of the boys at college and the others still in Mr. Newton's charge. Mamma had planned to spend so much of the income of the place every year in making first and second payments on her plantation and Negroes, the places as they were bought being put in the names of her children in order of their seniority. Thus by the time the youngest child was grown, each would have his own plantation.

Life seemed so easy and bright before us when in the winter of 1861 commenced the great events that swept away this joyous future and set our feet in new and rugged paths. And now, forty years from then, we are still walking the same rough path, laden with heavy burdens.

It was then when excitement was at white heat, when

state after state was seceding and we heard only of war and rumors of war, when company after company was being formed and regiment after regiment was being hurried to Virginia, that I took up the record of my journal that was to record many woeful changes before the four years of agony and strife were over.

KATE STONE HOLMES

Tallulah, Louisiana
November, 1900

1861

"Our Cause is just"

May 15: My Brother started at daybreak this morning for New Orleans. He goes as far as Vicksburg on horseback. He is wild to be off to Virginia. He so fears that the fighting will be over before he can get there that he has decided to give up the plan of raising a company and going out as Captain. He has about fifty men on his rolls and they and Uncle Bo have empowered him to sign their names as members of any company he may select. Mamma regrets so that My Brother would not wait and complete his commission. He could get his complement of men in two weeks, and having been educated at a military school ¹ gives him a great advantage at this time. And we think there will be fighting for many days yet.

We gave him quite a list of articles to be bought in the City, for it may be some time before we shop in New Orleans again.

May 23: Mamma was busy all the morning having the carpets taken up and matting put down and summer curtains hung. Of course the house was dusty and disagreeable. Mr. Newton and the children were shut up in the schoolroom and so escaped it, but Uncle Bo wandered aimlessly around, seeking rest and finding none. I retired to the fastness of my room with a new novel and a plate of candy and was oblivious to discomfort until Frank came to say dinner was ready and "the house shorely do look sweet and cool."

In the afternoon Mamma lay down to rest as she was tired

¹ In Frankfort, Ky.

out. Mr. Newton and Uncle Bo rode out to Omega [Land-ing]² for the mail and to hear the news. The boys, Little Sister, and I all went down the bayou for a walk with a running accompaniment of leaping, barking hounds, ranging the fields for a scent of deer or maybe a rabbit. The boys are so disgusted if the dogs race off after a rabbit. They think it ruins them for deer dogs. How pleasant to have the smooth, dry ground underfoot again after so many months of mud. It has been such a long, muddy winter and spring. No one knows what mud is until he lives on a buckshot place and travels buckshot roads.

Tonight a little fire was pleasant and we all gathered around it to hear Mr. Newton read the papers. Nothing but "War, War" from the first to the last column. Throughout the length and breadth of the land the trumpet of war is sounding, and from every hamlet and village, from city and country, men are hurrying by thousands, eager to be led to battle against Lincoln's hordes. Bravely, cheerily they go, willing to meet death in defense of the South, the land we love so well, the fairest land and the most gallant men the sun shines on. May God prosper us. Never again can we join hands with the North, the people who hate us so. We take quite a number of papers: *Harper's Weekly* and *Monthly*, the *New York Tribune*, *Journal of Commerce*, *Littell's Living Age*, the *Whig* and *Picayune* of New Orleans, and the Vicksburg and local sheets.³ What shall we do when Mr. Lincoln stops our mails?

The Northern papers do make us so mad! Even Little Sister, the child of the house, gets angry. Why will they tell such horrible stories about us? Greeley⁴ is the worst of the lot; his wishes for the South are infamous and he has the imagination of Poe. What shall we do when our mails are stopped and we are no longer in touch with the world?

We hear that Mr. Peck has raised a company of Irishmen

² A shipping point on the Mississippi in northeast Madison Parish.

³ The Vicksburg *Whig* and the *Madison Journal*, Delta, La.

⁴ Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*. A radical Republican paper, the *Tribune* was one of the most widely circulated newspapers of the day.—*Dictionary of American Biography*, VII, 531.

from the levee camp and that the Richmond [La.]⁵ company has disbanded and re-enlisted for the war. They were twelve-month men.

Wednesday Uncle Bo went out to the river to drill the men and soon returned with the news that the levee at Airie came very near giving away last night. The river is very high and a break there would put us entirely under. There are great fears of a tremendous overflow. Men are watching and the Negroes are working on the levees day and night.⁶

The Monticello company, 4th La. Regt., has been ordered up the river and the Lake Providence Cadets are off for New Orleans.

Late this afternoon Mamma and I went down to see the wife of the new overseer. She seems entirely too nice a woman, for her fashion is evidently from the planter class. I wonder why she married him. She does not look like a contented woman.

Uncle Bo, Ashburn, and I walked back and forth on the gallery in the cool moonlight, talking of soldier life and wondering what we who are left behind will do when both of our men folks are off and away.

From Uncle Bo's room floats the soft sound of violin, flute, and guitar. They are enjoying perhaps their last practice together. May God bless and keep them.

May 24: A lovely spring day, as fair as a poet's dream of May. Mamma is busy doing some machine work on Jimmy's shirts and I have been embroidering so enthusiastically that tonight I am tired out. In the afternoon Mamma, Mrs. Hardison, and I called on Mrs. Graves,⁷ and Mrs. Hardison and I adjourned to the orchard and feasted on the best plums, our first this spring. Mrs. Graves promised Mamma a bulb of lovely crimson gladiolus.

⁵ Richmond, the first parish seat of Madison Parish, was two miles south of the present parish seat, Tallulah.

⁶ Before the 1870's levees on the Mississippi and its tributaries were built and maintained by individuals and communities. Such levees were often fifteen feet high and thirty feet wide at the base.

⁷ R. W. Graves and his wife, Ann, were the parents of Lamartine, Emma, Eugenie, Ettie, and Ann.

The boys went over to the schoolhouse to hear Mr. Ewing's scholars "speak a piece." Mr. Ewing is tutor for the Curry⁸ and Hardison children. At the supper table they were rather severe in their criticisms of the speeches; of course they think they could have done better. And they were especially emphatic in their remarks on Mrs. Curry and her two youngest hopefuls. Mrs. Curry insisted on bossing the whole thing. As they were mostly her children and her tutor, I could not see why the boys should object.

Dr. Devine came up from the quarters, where he had been to see one of the sick Negroes, in high feather and his new Sunday suit. He did not have as much news as usual but perhaps more truth. It is a lovely moonlight night and Brother Walter is out riding the levee, watching in Mr. Newton's place. Ashburn and I walked a long time on the gallery after supper, he playing the flute and I repeating to myself poems recently learned—the last, "The Jacobite Fiddler," from a recent number of the *Living Age*.⁹

May 25: My Brother returned this evening. He did not succeed in joining the Monticello Guards from Carroll Parish. They had gone up the river, but he joined the Jeff Davis Guards at Vicksburg and was elected 3rd lieutenant. It is an Irish company officered by Americans. It was raised by Dr. Buckner and Capt. Manlove, and if My Brother had seen either of them on his way to New Orleans, they would have given him the captaincy. Tom Manlove is a captain. Uncle Bo cannot join it as a private, as the association would not be pleasant; and he is so disappointed not to be with My Brother. He hopes to get into the Volunteer Southern, which will leave Vicksburg in a few days.

The Jeff Davis Guards leave for Richmond [Va.] on Monday, and so My Brother and Uncle Bo get off in the morning as early as possible. My Brother told us much of the soldiers

⁸ William C. Curry (also spelled Currie), and his wife, Hester, were the parents of Huldah, Mary, Kate, Sybelia, and Leila. George S. Richards and Sarah Richards lived with them, children, perhaps, of a former marriage

⁹ *Littell's Living Age*, a monthly founded in Boston in 1844.

he saw in New Orleans: the Zouaves, with their gay, Turkish trousers and jackets and odd drill; the Tiger Rifles, recruited from the very dregs of the City and commanded by a man who has served a term in the penitentiary; and the Perrit Guards, the gambler's company—to be admitted one must be able to cut, shuffle, and deal on the point of a bayonet.

My Brother is in extravagant spirits. He is so glad to get off, and then he saw Kate and I think they have made it up again. Uncle Bo is very sad for he so wanted for them both to be in the same company. Now they can only hope to be in the same regiment. I can see them go, for I feel I know they will return. The parting will be dreadful for Mamma. She so depends on My Brother, her oldest and best beloved. The boys are disgruntled because they cannot go too.

May 26: Our two loved ones left us this morning, but we cannot think it a last farewell. My heart tells me they will come again. They go to bear all hardships, to brave all dangers, and to face death in every form, while we whom they go to protect are lapped safe in luxurious ease. But oh! the weary days of watching and waiting that stretch before us! We who stay behind may find it harder than they who go. They will have new scenes and constant excitement to buoy them up and the consciousness of duty done.

Mr. Catlin¹⁰ came over to tell them good-bye. My Brother explained everything to him and gave him a letter for the men Brother had been drilling. I hope they will not blame him.

Mamma fitted them out with everything she thought they could need. And their three horses were well loaded down. Wesley went to wait on them and was very proud of the honor of being selected to "go to battle with Marse Will." We hope he will do, though he has not been much about the house. Uncle Bo would not take a man for himself. He says a private has no business with a body servant, but if he changes his mind, a boy can be sent to him at any time.

Both will belong to infantry companies, and they will be

¹⁰ John D. Catlin, a neighboring planter.

fitted out with uniforms in Vicksburg. Brother Coley went with them as far as Vicksburg. They left so quickly that none of their friends knew in time to come over to say good-bye. Mr. Valentine will be sorry. He is such a friend of My Brother's.

They said good-bye in the fairest, brightest of May mornings. Will they come again in the summer's heat, the autumn's grey, or the winter's cold?

Mr. Newton and the boys rode out to the river with them. As they rode away, out of the yard and through the quarters, all the house servants and fieldhands watched them go. And many a heartfelt "Good-bye, Marse William and Marse Bo—God bless you" went with them.

I hope we put up everything they need. We lined their heavy blankets with brown linen and put pockets at the top for soap, combs, brushes, handkerchiefs, etc. The linen is tied to the blankets with strong tapes so that it can be easily taken off and washed. And we impressed it on Wesley that he must keep everything clean and take the best care of both our soldiers as long as they are together. He promised faithfully to do his best. Mamma has been very brave and stood the separation better than I hoped.

May 27: Mamma has been busy all day sewing on Jimmy's shirts and going through the vegetable and flower garden, all in a flourishing state. So many flowers, though our garden is but a new one yet. We must save all sorts of seeds, as we will get no more from the North. Mamma is having quantities of peas, potatoes, and all things eatable planted, as our only chance for anything from this time until the close of the war will be to raise it ourselves. Strict economy is to be the order of the day.

It is probable that meat will be very high, and by advice of Mr. Fellowes¹¹ Mamma will try to raise enough to do the place. She has put Jeffery to devoting his whole time to the hogs and cattle. We have not a great quantity of either just now, but they will soon grow.

¹¹ Cornelius Fellowes, of Fellowes & Co., New Orleans, was the factor for Mrs. Stone.

Times are already dreadfully hard. It was difficult for My Brother to raise enough money to fit them out—could only do it by pledging cotton at the bank.

Webster, who went to bring the horses back, came this morning. Wonka is the horse Uncle Bo gave me some time ago. He is such a lovely blood bay, so spirited, with every gait, and fleet as the wind when we start on a race. But I shall give him to Uncle Bo when he gets home. He will deserve a good horse after walking so long.

All Uncle Bo's jewelry, he left with me. He has quite an assortment of pins and rings and watch chains. One makes a lovely bracelet and I have often worn it.

Roanoke, a powerful hunter, will belong to Brother Walter until My Brother gets back. I am glad Dr. Buckner did not keep Roanoke.

Ashburn and Johnny, the youngest of the boys, brought us some mulberries from their ride in the woods, but nobody but children cares to eat mulberries. They report the blackberries as nearly ripe, and we will have a lovely trip for them deep in the green woods in an old clearing. They are the finest, glossy, sweet berries ever seen and with the dew on them—delicious.

We had a warm discussion after tea, Mr. Newton contending that the states had no right to secede immediately on Lincoln's election and that they should have remained quiet for four years and seen what would be the policy of the government. We all bitterly oppose this view of the subject. Why, in four years we would have no rights worth fighting for! He thinks that if the states had been patient there would have been no war for years and that it would have been better to submit to Lincoln's rule no matter how unjust than to have provoked a war. But oh, no! We cannot see it that way. We should make a stand for our rights—and a nation fighting for its own homes and liberty cannot be overwhelmed. Our Cause is just and must prevail.

May 28: We have been busy sewing today. This evening Ashburn and Johnny went to Omega for the mail, and the poor, careless, little Johnny brought back the wrong saddle-

bags. So no mail today, and it is of such absorbing interest now. Johnny, seeing the disappointment of the family, burst into tears and shut himself up in his room and refuses all comfort in the way of supper and solicitations. He is a sensitive child.

May 29: Brother Walter brought the mail this evening. Rumors of battles, but nothing reliable. The papers are filled with war news.

A letter from Mrs. Rossman to Mamma. She was all ready to pay us a long visit in company with Claudy Gibson when she heard that the roads here were impassable from rains, and so they returned home. Of course the report was exaggerated. We can get out even in the worst of times in a road wagon or on horseback, if not in the carriage.

Also a letter from Kate Nailor. From her main message to My Brother, they must be betrothed lovers again. I am glad for his sake and hers. And Kate is my dearest friend, but it is hard to give up the first place in the heart of my darling Brother even to this other Kate. There are only fifteen months between us and we have always been such chums. We have enjoyed so much together. Truly, I shall never love a stranger as I love him who has been my heart's dearest since babyhood. But oh! there is no use borrowing trouble over that, when so many things may happen before we three meet again.

I studied a little French—I am getting quite rusty in it—and read a most interesting paper on Iceland. What a dreary land.

May 30: Brother Coley got back from Vicksburg today. He said good-bye to My Brother on Monday and Uncle Bo on Wednesday. The Jeff Davis Guards went off with bouquets on bayonets, with shouts and hurrahs, and the Volunteer Southernns amid sobs and cries. The very flower of the Vicksburg young men go with that company and many a heavy heart is left behind. I am glad Uncle Bo could get in the Company. He knows most of them, as Warren County [Miss.] is his old home. Frank Nailor goes with them, though

he has only one arm, but the two Booths withdrew. The girls made a great fuss over My Brother—said he was most captivating in his new uniform. Wish we could have seen him.

Flora, the seamstress, has a little boy.

May 31: Mamma, Mrs. Hardison, and I spent a pleasant day at Dr. Carson's. Met a Mr. Abercrombie, cousin of Mrs. Carson, and found him rather pleasant but a bit shy. We rode down in the afternoon to see Mrs. Savage. She has been quite ill and shows it in her looks. She is much depressed. Having scarlet fever so long on the place, losing so many Negroes, and seeing nobody but the doctor from the outside world, are trying to anybody, but she should be thankful that all her family were spared. Her garden is lovely, such a variety of flowers all in bloom and in lovely order. Flowers are her delight.

Had a chat with Robert Norris, Mr. McGee the tutor, Mr. Kaiser, and Mr. Dobbs, who is now an ordained minister, and Mr. Hornwisher (?). All are staying with Mrs. Savage. One would not think she could ever be lonely, but she is very fond of entertaining, giving large dining and evening sociables.

We reached home long after dark and found the boys just starting out to look for us. We were quite frightened in the dark woods below Mr. Hardison's.

June 1: The boys are all away for the day: Brother Coley, Mr. Newton, and Ashburn visiting on the river, Brother Walter at the [Milliken's] Bend,¹² and Jimmy and Johnny out hunting. They brought back the first blackberries of the season. Mail received this evening and all our papers, and so we have plenty to read. We fear this will be our last Northern mail, and so we take our last insult from Greeley this evening.

¹² Milliken's Bend, established about 1820, was situated on a small rise at a large bend in the Mississippi about twenty miles above Vicksburg. A shipping point for plantations in the area, it was later engulfed by the river.

June 3: Went to Goodrich's¹³ to church yesterday, our first sermon since December. Heard Mr. Holbury, the new Methodist minister, preach for the first time. Quite satisfactory.

Mamma and I went today through a penetrating drizzle to the Bend to see Julia Reed and Mrs. Reading.¹⁴ Stopped for Mrs. Hardison, who sent out some delightful plums to interest us until she should be ready. Had rather a stirring time getting to the Bend, a rough road and had to get out in the rain for the mules to pull up the levee and out again for them to pull down it. Stuck in a mudhole of seepage water just as we entered the city. But for the timely assistance of Mr. Owens directing Webster and Charles, we might have been there yet. Arrived at Mrs. Reading's muddy and tired and our gallant deliverer, Mr. Owens, bade us adieu as he was then on his way to camp at Richmond. He is said to be engaged to Miss Celeste Newton of the Bend, a pretty girl in her teens.

We spent rather a dry day, notwithstanding the rain, and in the afternoon walked back through mud and slush to regain the carriage on the other side of the mudhole. It rained all the way home, and here we went climbing, slipping and sliding, up and down the wet levee and over the sloshy roads. Mamma is always afraid in a closed carriage and was afraid to trust the mules, except on a dead level. Our last trip until clear weather and good roads.

June 4: Wrote a little French and read *Lena Rivers*, a trifling novel.¹⁵ In the afternoon Ashburn and I rode out to meet Brother Coley and Aunt Sarah and the children, who were to have come up on the boat, but we were again disappointed for about the third time in her coming. Brother Coley says some of the other boys must go to meet her the next time for he is tired of vain trips.

¹³ Goodrich's Landing was on the Mississippi a few miles above Milliken's Bend.

¹⁴ R. G. Reading, merchant, and his wife, M. J., were parents of two small children.

¹⁵ By Mary Jane Holmes (1828-1907), published in 1856.

June 5: A lovely June day, and Mr. and Mrs. Curry with the three youngest children spent the day, their first visit in months. Annie, the baby, is a nice enough little tot, but what a time her mother has over her, washing, dressing, undressing, and fussing over her most of the day. One would never think it was about the eleventh child. I wonder if she worked so over all the others and why she has a nurse. Late in the afternoon I went with Brother Coley and Ashburn to the blackberry patch, a glorious ride, a fresh breeze, splendid horse, and a sweeping pace, and the two frolicsome boys. Mamma said the day had tired her out, but the berries refreshed her mind by supper—and the merry chatter of the boys. After supper Mr. McRae, the overseer, came up for a long consultation with her. One by one the boys dropped off to bed, and when at last Mr. McRae took himself off and Mr. Newton, Mamma, and I had a most pleasant, non-sensical talking bee, while enjoying the nicest little meringues and custards.

I lost my comb riding. It just suited my heavy hair, and combs are combs these days. So Jimmy, the dear obliging fellow, has promised to go early in the morning and look for it.

I have moved back in my own cosy room again. I like it better than the large east room with its staring windows. Little Sister, for the last few nights, has deserted Mamma and is sleeping with me.

June 7: Mamma and I made a dress for Sister by 12 o'clock then read and idled away the afternoon. After supper I had two games of chess with Mamma and I was winner. Read a little French tonight. Sister does not to say enjoy her French lessons, but then I know I am a horrid teacher. How the mosquitoes are humming outside the bar. There must be thousands but they can't get me.

June 8: The boys with Ben Clarkson¹⁶ and George Richards were off by daybreak on a grand hunt. They were all back by eleven and the net proceeds of the hunt were six

¹⁶ Ben Clarkson, son of H. B. Clarkson, overseer.

suits of wet clothes, six good appetites, and one chill bagged by Mr. Clarkson.

Brother Coley went to the Bend and brought back the mail. The *Tribune* and *Living Age* still rampant. No numbers of *Harper's* for some days. The boys went for berries this evening and were caught in the rain. They came back wet but cheerful with lots of fruit, the finest I ever saw, and so sweet. Johnny expected two of the Carson boys for the day, but they failed to come.

June 8: A long weary day. Mamma, Jimmy, and I prepared for church but the weather was so cloudy we gave it out. Wrote to Kate in the afternoon and took a muddy walk. Went to the quarter to see old Aunt Annie who is sick. Took her some little delicacies and read a psalm. I am afraid she does not understand much of it. She is old and feeble. I doubt whether she will get well.

June 10: Brother Coley and I rode out to Mrs. Savage's yesterday afternoon, and I remained over and came home with Brother Walter this evening. Found Anna Dobbs sick in bed—chills, and unable to take quinine. Scarlet fever is still bad on the place and they have few visitors. They were quite glad to see us. No topic but the war. Mr. Hornwasher was eloquent on the subject of Col. Ellsworth's death.¹⁷ The ride home was so exhilarating.

When quietly our days are passing, when the whole planet is in such a state of feverish excitement and everywhere there is the stir and mob of angry life—Oh! to see and be in it all. I hate weary days of inaction. Yet what can women do but wait and suffer?

June 13: The day of national humiliation, fasting, and prayer. We attended church at Goodrich's, a large congregation and a heartfelt service. Mr. Holbury preached an

¹⁷ Colonel E. Elmer Ellsworth's 11th New York Regt. (First Fire Zouaves) occupied Alexandria, Va., May 24, 1861. After removing a secession flag flying over the Marshall House, Ellsworth was fatally shot by James T. Jackson, keeper of the hotel.—*Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, ed. Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel (New York, 1884-87), I, 179. Hereafter this work will be cited as *Battles and Leaders*.

excellent sermon and made an earnest prayer. The day was generally observed. Oh! may the prayers of so many ascending, laden with the same petition, bring God's blessing on our Nation.

"O! Lord bow down thine ear, hear us for we are poor and needy." We feel that the arm of the flesh is powerless to save "and in Thee, Oh Lord, have we put our trust."

June 14: Busy this morning making cakes for our expected company to devour. Finished one sleeve of my linen embroidery. We all walked down this evening to the quarters to look at the new brick cook oven. It certainly will save many steps for the woman who cooks for the hands. I think Aunt Ellen has that job now.

Mr. Newton, Sister, and I walked on to Mr. Hardison's to invite them to dine tomorrow but found some of the children sick, and so Mrs. Hardison had to decline. A lovely evening and we all sat out on the gallery until after eleven.

June 15: A houseful of company today. Mrs. Carson and three boys, Mrs. Newman¹⁸ and her two girls, Miss Bettie Carter, Joe Carson, and Mr. McGee, and in the afternoon, Robert Norris and Anna, were all with us today and we had a lively time. It was Mrs. Newman's first visit in a long time, but when she wishes to be specially agreeable, she should leave "Brat" (Walter) at home. He is a terror.

Anna is here tonight to remain until Monday when Mrs. Savage's family will come out to spend the day. Anna was quite fatigued from her long ride on that ill-gaited pony but she managed to sit up until after 11 o'clock.

June 16: None of us went to church today. The long ride in the hot sun would be too fatiguing, though I notice none of us mind it when we are going to a dining. This has not seemed like Sunday, which is generally a long day when spent at home. We were all in the parlor talking and laughing, discussing the pronunciation of words and looking them up in the dictionary when yesterday's mail came in, bringing

¹⁸ George R. Newman, planter, and his wife, Ann, were the parents of George, Lizzie, and Walter.

two letters from My Brother and one from Uncle Bo, the first since they left three weeks ago. We were so delighted to hear from them that we forgot everything else and the letters interested us the rest of the day. Both are in Richmond [Va.] and are well and comfortable.

We all went to our rooms in the afternoon and took a long rest, then a short walk, and supper. All sat up on the gallery until after twelve discussing many and varied things; then to our rooms where Anna and I kept it up until two. We did read a long time in the Bible. I wrote to Uncle Bo and Mamma, Mr. Newton, and several of the boys wrote a partnership letter to My Brother.

June 17: Anna, Mr. Newton, Brother Coley, and I were up bright and early to take a canter to the blackberry patch. Anna's horse got out and that detained us, but we compromised on Longfellow, one of the carriage horses, and we were off by sunup. Such a delightful rush through the cool, clear morning and plenty of berries, though we did get wet to our waists. Then a race home just in time with our berries for breakfast.

Mamma nearly worried herself into a fever this morning preparing for visitors, and it was so late before they came that we had about given them out. But they came in a body when they did make their appearance—Mrs. Savage and the two little girls, Emily Norris and Anna Nicholson. Mrs. Savage, to punish them for an act of disobedience, had told them that they should not come here again until next Christmas, but she had relented after six months. The girls were wild with delight to be out here again and were racing all over the place. Mr. Hornwasher and Mr. Kaiser and Robert were also of the party, and Mark Valentine came in a little later.

I had a long talk with Mr. Hornwasher on the subject of war and the battles he has been in. Both he and Mr. Kaiser are Hungarian refugees, political exiles. Mr. Hornwasher is a Count something in his own land. He is now a teacher of music and languages, and his great friend, Mr. Kaiser, is tutor at Mrs. Savage's. They are highly educated and re-

finer men and are entertaining talkers, notwithstanding their odd pronunciation.

Robert had fever and Mrs. Savage was so unwell that both had to lie down. Dinner passed off most pleasantly, at least to me. I sat between Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Newton and they made themselves very entertaining. Mr. Valentine and Anna sat together and hardly spoke to each other a dozen times. They never hit it off somehow. I must not let them sit next to each other again.

War was the principal topic. Both Mr. Hornwisher and Mr. Kaiser speak of enlisting. I should think that they had had enough of war in their own country. Mr. Valentine treats the whole subject of the war in his usual sarcastic, cynical manner. To him, the whole affair is a grand humbug, the enthusiasm and patriotism of the South something to be mocked and sneered at. He cannot appreciate the earnestness and grandness of this great national upheaval, the throes of a Nation's birth. I could shake him.

Mrs. Savage was suffering and her party left rather early, Anna, Robert, and Mr. Hornwisher following later in the afternoon, and Mr. Valentine took the road at sundown. Mr. Kaiser, Sister, the boys, and Mr. Newton went riding to the berry patch as usual, and I went out to have the flowers Mrs. Savage brought planted. The flowers are getting on beautifully. We will soon have a garden to be proud of. It will rival Mrs. Savage's and Mrs. Carson's.

The berry party got back in time for Mr. Kaiser and me, with a little assistance from the boys, to eat all the berries. They had not wearied themselves by much gathering. Then, my fingers being badly stained, Mr. Kaiser tried to bleach them over burning matches with but indifferent success.

After tea, Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Newton gave us some enchanting music on the flutes, and about eleven Mr. Kaiser mounted his horse for home. He is most entertaining and pleasant to have in the house. Mr. Valentine has shaken off most of his shy, constrained manner and is getting to feel a little at ease. He leads such an isolated life, just he and his father, and this is about the only place he has ever visited

until within the last few months when he has made a few calls on his neighbors. He is a schoolmate of My Brother and is really one of the most intelligent, brightest minds we know. Their place, Oasis, is just back of us, a larger plantation entirely surrounded by cypress breaks. His father we have not seen. He is an old gentleman who goes nowhere, who idolizes his son and is anxious for him to make friends, and who was so pleased when Mark commenced visiting us.

June 18: We expected Aunt Sarah certainly today. Ashburn went down to Vicksburg yesterday for her. We sent the carriage to the landing today, but it came back with only a letter saying she would be up on Saturday.

Aunt Laura is ill. She has just lost a young baby and I know is much distressed and disappointed. She is so devoted to her only child, Beverly, the loveliest little girl I ever saw. Dr. Buckner thinks her perfect and really I believe she is, bodily, mentally, and physically.

The little baby, we hear, was horribly deformed. God in mercy took it, but Aunt Laura knows nothing of its misfortune.

A letter from Kate and a note from Lou Morris saying she and one of her sisters would be up on Thursday to spend several days. Webster and Betsy are busy gathering berries and Annie is making jam of them.

June 19: Early risers. Cakemaking, preserving, and peeling apples are the order of the day. A little sewing and French and the day rounded off with a ride with Johnny.

Great excitement! About nine in the evening we were sitting on the front gallery and a runaway Negro passed just in front of the house. The boys rushed out after him, but he soon distanced them, and I was glad he escaped. I hate to think how he will be punished, perhaps whipped unmercifully. The runaways are numerous and bold. We live on a mine that the Negroes are suspected of an intention to spring on the fourth of next month. The information may be true or false, but they are being well watched in every section where there are any suspects. Our faith is with God.

The river is falling fast and there is no longer fear of an overflow.

June 20: Mrs. Hardison and Lorena, her oldest little girl, spent today with us. We expected the Morris girls, but they failed us. The worst of it was that Mr. Dobbs and Joe Carson came out this balmy evening just to meet them. I must say they stood the disappointment charmingly, and the evening, spent on the moonlit gallery with the black shadows of the great trees resting on the grass, was most pleasant until they made their farewell bow at eleven.

Mr. Newton has a grand disgust for Mrs. Hardison. He has never liked her and today her remarks on Mr. Ewing ironed in the impression. I thought them in bad taste—nothing more.

We have Annie back in the house. She saves us much trouble.

June 21: I was busy all day on the sewing machine, embroidering, studying French, and "reading after Poe," as My Brother says. As we are all alone tonight, I was afraid to venture on any of his most fearsome pieces and so content myself with those that are only naturally horrible, avoiding the supernatural. Ashburn is still in Vicksburg and the boys and Mr. Newton went out to Dr. Carson's to spend the night and go swimming in the river tomorrow.

In such lovely moonlight one should be ashamed to feel afraid, but I sleep with Mamma tonight.

June 22: This evening, after keeping us on the *qui vive* for a month, Aunt Sarah and the children arrived to our great pleasure. The boys came home dull and tired, the effect of spending so many hours in the water. Hope none of them will be ill from it.

We are all glad to have Ashburn back. Such an affectionate, lovable boy, he is with Mamma and me so much. He never quarrels with the others and is perfectly obedient. Mamma certainly has the gift for managing boys. They never fight and rarely quarrel or get angry with each other.

A letter from My Brother to Mamma. Both My Brother

and Uncle Bo are quite well and in good spirits and are still in Richmond with no immediate prospect of being ordered off.

Mr. Catlin called this morning. His visits are not unmixed delight. Fortunately, he does not come often. I do not suppose he enjoys them any more than we do, but all in the way of duty. Letter from Kate and Julia. One from Cousin Jenny Austin.

June 23: Mamma, Aunt Sarah, and I attended church at the Masonic Lodge at Goodrich's. Arrived entirely too early. Mr. Dobbs preached a passable sermon, but why should I criticize. Could I do as well? After the services we held quite a reception, all coming up to welcome Aunt Sarah. Dinner was just ready on our return and was very enjoyable after our long ride in the summer sun. Found Johnny suffering with severe earache, another ill effect of their long hours in the water. Jessie is very sympathetic.

June 27: Monday Mamma, Aunt Sarah, and I went to Salem to call on Mrs. Savage's family. Found her in bed but feeling better for cheerful companionship. She soon dressed and took us through the garden, now a wealth of bloom. Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Hornwaser escorted me and each presented me a lovely bouquet made by himself to judge which had the best taste. The peaches were excellent. The second time we have had any. Mrs. Hardison sent Sister a nice basket of them, her earliest. Our trees will not bear until next year.

Zou and Lou Morris came up and spent two days. Hearing that their mother was ill, they left in a drizzling rain. I am afraid they had rather a dull visit—sometimes it is hard to entertain—but they are such bright, pleasant girls that there should be no trouble in amusing them.

Tuesday evening Aunt Sarah received a dispatch from Mr. Miller calling her to Memphis. She packed at once and by daylight Wednesday was ready to get off. Brother Coley went to Vicksburg with her. The thirty-mile drive to Vicksburg is a wearisome one. So ends the visit we had looked forward to with such pleasure. Mr. Miller, Captain he is, now must be in camp near Memphis.

The exertion of entertaining, the stir and confusion of the children, and the hot weather have been too much for Mamma, and she has gone to bed really ill. Aunt Sarah got to Vicksburg in time, but by some mismanagement missed the train. Hope they got off the next day. Jessie is a bright, affectionate child but oh! so bad. Horace is a pretty little blond boy, the pet of both his father and mother and very much like the Marshalls, while Jessie is more like her mother's family, the Ragans, and I think the best looking.

Fannie died of dropsy yesterday. We are all sorry for her mother, Betty. She has lost two children and her husband since December. The doctor thinks this child must have had scarlet fever and no one knew. In that case, we may expect it to spread through all the quarters.

No news of battle since the battle of Bethel.¹⁹

June 28: A beautiful sunshiny day. Just enough rain has fallen to perfect the corn and help the cotton. Surely this year we have had "the early and the latter rains" and the promise of abundant crops. The North cannot starve us, try as they may, and God will aid us in our righteous cause. Mamma is still in bed but hopes to be up tomorrow. We all sat on the back gallery this evening as her room opens on that and we could talk to her through the window over her bed. Mr. Newton and Ashburn gave us selections from popular songs, "Those Dark Eyes," "Hard Times Come Again No More" and so on, and several serenades. Ashburn has learned very rapidly. He used to practice, when he first started in, sitting right at Mamma's side. Uncle Bo asked her how in the world she could stand it, how could she read or sew with that droning, mournful discord sounding right at her ears, and suggested that she should send Ashburn into another room. But she said no. It gave Ashburn great pleasure and he would soon learn. She had grown so used to it she was scarcely annoyed. She certainly is patient with

¹⁹ Bethel, Va., June 10, 1861. Dates of battles given in footnotes hereafter are taken from *Statistical Record of the Armies of the United States* (supplement to *Campaigns of the Civil War*), comp Frederick Phisterer (New York, 1907), *passim*.

all these rollicking boys but most of all with Ashburn, who is devoted to "Sis Mandy." They are good, gentlemanly boys and have lots of fun together.

Mr. Hubler (?), a mechanic at work on the sawmill, was telling us his troubles. His wife and six children are in St. Louis, and he cannot get them away or even get letters from them. He says if the war lasts much longer he will go to Cairo and try to ride into St. Louis on a flatboat and get through the blockade if possible. He made us sorry for him, but there is no way of helping him.

Dr. Young and Dr. and Mrs. J. Theus Taylor, living on Willow Bayou, are the only Unionists that we hear of in the whole parish, and we think they should be sent North to a more congenial people.

Have commenced on Motley's *Dutch Republic*, three large volumes.²⁰ It is finely written and I think will prove quite interesting. There seemed so much to do today with Mamma sick that I felt overwhelmed so compromised and let the servants do the best they could and I did what I pleased—a little reading, sewing, and talking with Mamma. Mrs. McRae came up in the afternoon and amused us telling of Mr. Anthony and his "last dear companion," his third. He seems to have caught a Tartar this time.

June 29: Heard that Mrs. Hardison was sick and walked up early this morning to see her. She was in bed, not at all well. Mr. Hardison and I were having quite a political discussion when a basket of fine peaches was handed around and we forgot our discussion for a more agreeable pastime. Mamma is better today but only feels well enough to lie on the lounge and bed. I commenced a set of chemise and will do the machine work, and Courtney, the seamstress, will finish them.

In the late afternoon I went riding with Ashburn. We returned by Tensas bridge and stopped at Mr. Curry's for the mail, but they had not received it. Later Mr. Clarkson brought it in. Only a few papers. No letters from our soldiers.

²⁰ *The Rise of the Dutch Republic* (1856), 3 vols., by John Lothrop Motley (1814-77).

Ashburn is captain of a company of boys and is very enthusiastic. He went to the Bend today to select stuff for the uniforms but could find nothing suitable. We suggested white Lowell, red trimming, and cattails in their hats, to be called the Cat Tail Guards, but it did not seem to meet with approval. Sitting on the back gallery after tea, we heard the music of the banjo, accompanied by several strong voices, float up from the quarters.

The house servants have been giving a lot of trouble lately—lazy and disobedient. Will have to send one or two to the field and replace them from the quarters if they do not settle down. I suppose the excitement in the air has infected them. The fieldhands go on without trouble.

June 30: A fair, bright Sunday, but none of us went to church. Webster was sick and could not drive, and most of the horses are lame or disabled in some way. So the boys stayed at home. It is strange how little it takes to keep one from going to church and how much to keep one from attending a party. Mamma had fever again today but she is sitting up tonight.

There is a comet visible tonight. We were surprised to see it, as we did not know it was expected. Have seen nothing of it in the papers. It is not very bright but has the appearance of a large star, Venus at her brightest, with a long train of light seen dimly as through a mist. Jimmy first discovered it. Two splendid meteors fell just above it, and the boys said it was a big star chased by little ones trying to regain its orbit. Read nearly all day—the Bible, Motley, and a short time in a new magazine.

Have a flock of the softest, yellowest, little ducks.

July 1: Mamma is sick again today from the medicine. I hope she will be relieved by tomorrow. It upsets everything for her to be sick. I cannot settle to any work or even read with any comprehension. Commenced *Anne of Geierstein*²¹ to be read in connection with Motley's sketch of

²¹ *Anne of Geierstein, or the Maiden of the Mist* (1829) is a sequel to Sir Walter Scott's *Quentin Durward* (1823).

Charles the Bold. A wet disagreeable day, Mamma sleeping through most of it, but she waked up this evening and was telling me tales of my babyhood and early childhood. It seems My Brother and I were quite noted little people in our circle of acquaintances. At eighteen months I learned my letters with My Brother, who was fifteen months older, and by the time I was two and a half could read very well. I knew *Mother Goose* by heart, could repeat pages of poetry and a number of little tales, and chatter of any and everything by the hour. And yet I was a good little child and the delight of my Father, who thought me a wonderful little creature and would never let me be crossed. I was his only daughter for so long. I remember his pleasure when Sister was born after six sons had been ushered into the world. My Brother had read through the Testament at five years old. They must have started us to school when we were babes. I do not remember the time when I could not read. My first recollection of books was trying to teach my little Aunt Serena, three years the older, her letters, sitting side by side on the steps. How strange it seemed to me that she could not read. I thought everybody read as everybody talked—naturally.

Mamma's talk was a great surprise to me as I had always thought I was the ugly duckling of the whole family. Aunt Sarah, Cousin Titia, Cousin Jenny, and Serena—all of us children together, though all older than I—I always heard praised for their beauty. I had always, since I could think, had the idea that my Father and all the family petted and encouraged me because they thought me so ugly and were sorry all the time that I was suffering from this idea, for it has been the shadow on my life. I was my Father's favorite; he thought me perfect. I had the admiration of the rest of the family for what they were pleased to think my quick, bright mind. The knowledge of this will, I think, change my life from this night. Finding that I have been much beloved all my life, I will try to put away the morbid thoughts that have so often harassed me—the fear that, being ugly and unattractive, no one could ever really care for me, and that I was doomed to a life of loneliness and despair.

Mamma by one long, sweet talk has exorcised this gloomy spirit; from this time forth I will try to make the best of the girl that Father loved so.

Mamma says I was the quaintest-looking little figure when three years old, being small with long yellow hair plaited down my back—my Father would never allow it to be touched with the scissors. I had a short, stumpy, little body and the very tiniest feet and hands, like bird claws, so small and thin, and a grave dignified manner. But I was an incessant chatterbox with the funniest lisp when perched in a high chair in the chimney corner reciting poetry and telling tales to amuse the laughing grown folks. The lisp I have kept to this day, try as I will to get rid of it. But not another feature is like the Kate of today. I am tall, not quite five feet six, and thin, have an irregular face, a quantity of brown hair, a shy, quiet manner, and talk but little.

What an egotistical page, but it has made me happy. No more morose dreamings, but a new outlook on life.

July 2: Mamma is still sick; so we sent for the doctor to see her, much against her will, but he relieved her almost at once though she will not acknowledge it. He also went to see Chainey, a sick child in the quarters.

Mrs. Hardison and Mrs. McRae came in this evening, and while talking to them I made a blue rosette for Ashburn. His company is flourishing but is still without uniforms. Mail this evening—*Whig*, *Picayune*, and a letter from Uncle Bo to Mamma. They are still in Richmond. He writes in low spirits and seems disgusted with a soldier's life. Wish we could talk with him for an hour. He is always so cheerful that it startles me to think of him as sad.

Still trouble with the house servants. Aunt Lucy, the head of them all, ran away this morning but was back by dinner. Mamma did not have her punished. All of them are demoralized from Charles up.

July 3: Mamma was feeling quite ill all day but is better this evening. All the boys and Mr. Newton went to Omega to witness the consecration of the flag belonging to Mr. Peck's

company.²² There was quite a crowd. Many ladies were there and all had a pleasant evening. Mary Gustine,²³ the Morris girls, and others of our acquaintance were present. If Mamma had been well, we would have gone.

The comet increases in brilliancy and beauty every night.

July 4: Mamma is still in bed but is better. The boys have holiday in honor of the Fourth but more I think to keep up old customs than for any feeling of respect for the day. This is the first Fourth in our memory to pass without a public merrymaking of some kind, but we do not hear of the day's being celebrated in town or country. There are other and sterner duties before us. It would ill become us as a Nation to be celebrating a day of independence when we are fighting for our very existence.

This July sun has set on a Nation in arms against itself, host against host. Those who have clasped each other's hands in kindest spirits less than one short year ago, as friends, as countrymen, as children of one common Mother, now stand opposing each other in deadliest hate, eager to water Old Mother Earth with the blood of her children. Our Cause is right and God will give us the victory. Will the next July sun rise on a Nation peaceful, prosperous, and happy, or on a land desolate and disgraced? He alone knows.

Congress meets today.²⁴ The lives of thousands hang on its decision. Will it be for peace or war? We should know by Saturday.

Brother Coley returned tonight. He had gone to Memphis with Aunt Sarah. Mr. Miller is stationed only seven hours from Memphis and can run in quite frequently. He is trying to get the Colonelcy of a regiment and is stirring around in his usual style. He says he spends \$2,000 a month and lives delightfully. Hope he will make an equal division with Aunt Sarah. Brother Coley enjoyed the trip greatly.

²² Captain W. P. Peck, Madison Co, La. Militia.

²³ Mrs. Sophia Gustine, a widow, was the mother of Mary (Kate's age), and four smaller children.

²⁴ In his proclamation of April 15, 1861, calling out the militia, Lincoln summoned Congress for a special session beginning July 4.

July 5: Mrs. Carson and Joe came out this morning to call on Aunt Sarah. Mrs. Carson seemed scarcely able to sit up. Both Eddie and Dr. Carson are in bed with fever. They returned home in time to enjoy a wild turkey, the first one killed by Jimmy Carson. Our boys must look to their laurels. None of them has brought home a wild turkey.

Mrs. Carson is a very attractive woman, so amiable and kind. She begged Mamma and me to go out and spend several days with them for the change. They brought us a lot of peaches and apples that look like winter apples from the North—not over fragrant. Mrs. Carson is still interested in war news, but Mrs. Boyd is on her place now and Mrs. Carson has a never failing subject of interest in her. I was sitting outside with Joe but could hear Mrs. Carson giving Mamma a full account of Mrs. Boyd's extravagances and the eccentricities of the Bailey family generally.

Little Sister went over this afternoon to hear Mr. Ewing's scholars speak and she came back a sadder and a wiser child. Mr. Ewing took that occasion to whip How Curry and it seemed to shock and startle Sister greatly. She never before realized how dreadful a whipping was, as she had never seen one administered.

The Fourth and today passed without any trouble with the Negroes. The general impression has been that the Negroes looked for a great upheaval of some kind on that day. In some way they have gotten a confused idea of Lincoln's Congress meeting and of the war; they think it is all to help them, and they expected for "something to turn up." I hope the house servants will settle to their work now.

July 6: Have been reading the last chapter of Ecclesiastes, one of my favorite chapters in the Bible. The last two verses always remind me of Dr. Elliott and my old school days in Nashville.²⁵ Dr. Elliott read them so often from the platform.

²⁵ Soon after its founding in 1816, the Nashville Female Academy had an enrollment of 200 young ladies. The Reverend Mr. Elliott was the chief instructor as early as 1842. The institution did not survive the Civil War.—W. Henry McRaven, *Nashville, "Athens of the South"* (Chapel Hill, 1949), 61 and 75.

All the Negroes have holiday today instead of on the Fourth, and what a perfect day, made when Nature was in a laughing mood.

Ashburn went to the Bend, still seeing about the uniforms, and brought back, by my request, a lovely new hoop for me. It is such a comfort to have it. He also brought the ribbon for the boys' rosettes, red and white with a blue button for the center. We shall have to make them for all the company.

Jimmy and I rode over to see the Currys. Mrs. Curry made such a fuss over our visit that we were glad we went. Mr. Curry is in bad health and is very despondent.

It is 11 o'clock, and from the quarters I hear the faint scrape of the fiddles and the thump, thump, thump of the dancers.

Had our first ripe melon today. Would have had one yesterday, but Longfellow got hold of it first.

Courtney gave birth to twins today, little girls, the first twins born on Brokenburn. Good luck to them.

July 7: Mrs. Dancy²⁶ and all the children spent today with us, and I was sorry as I wanted to go to church. We thought she would hate to visit on Sunday and would not wish to keep people from church. But no, she likes it. She says she always goes Sunday if she can—it is lonesome at home—and that she sent us word so that we could not go to church when she had ridden so far to see us. She is a happy-go-lucky somebody. Mr. and Mrs. Curry came over to say good-bye. He is going off for his health. Mrs. Hardison sent Mamma a lovely basket of peaches. Fruit never comes out of season to us. Let it come morning, noon, or night, we receive it with acclamation. All arm ourselves with knives and when we arise from that basket nothing is left but peelings, not even the seed as they are sent at once to Uncle Hoccles to plant. Made the rosettes for the company. Late in the evening walked through the garden and found two scarlet geraniums and the nasturtiums about dead. Must speak to Uncle Hoccles about it. Went walking with Walter

²⁶ Dr. and Mrs. David Dancy owned and operated Crescent Plantation below Richmond on Roundaway Bayou.

and Ashburn. Dr. Devine joined us at the quarter and stayed to tea.

Dr. Devine told us something of Lincoln's message. No hope for peace. Lincoln calls for 400,000 men and \$4,000,000. He may raise the troops, but we do not think the money will be forthcoming. Such a sum will break the North in her present insolvent state.

We hear of another engagement in which we came off victorious, though they were three to one. No particulars.

Much sickness on the place—chills and fevers. Mamma has had the storeroom moved just back of My Brother's room. It has been robbed of nearly all the groceries and we think Jessy is the thief.

July 9: Mrs. Carson and Mrs. Boyd made a two-hour call today. Mrs. Boyd looks much like Mrs. Manlove and I fancy has her temper. She is the most eager, enthusiastic talker, deeply interested in the war, and is president of the ladies' sewing society in Natchez. And it is almost incredible the number of garments they have made for the soldiers. They have been sewing only three months. She was horrified when we all acknowledged that we had not taken a stitch in the Cause. With us it has been but the way that is wanting. Mrs. Carson seemed to feel our remissness as very serious. We might have done something before this.

Joe sent me a basket of pears and a lovely message. We see from a late *Whig* that both My Brother and Uncle Bo's companies have been sent to Winchester and a battle is expected there very soon. My Brother's wish will be realized. He wrote he was so tired of inaction.

July 12: News of an engagement and glorious victory for us somewhere in Missouri and rumors of a battle in Virginia.²⁷ No particulars. I wish we could hear when all these battles are fought. Guard our loved ones, oh! Father.

Thursday Mamma and I spent with Mrs. Curry the long,

²⁷ There were no important movements or battles in Missouri at this time. The newspapers of both sections often printed grossly inaccurate accounts of supposed victories.

long, weary day. She certainly is the most peculiar woman. Her manner and conversation were full of fresh surprises. Then the children and the servants and the whole uncomfortable ménage were too much for seven or eight hours of a scorching day. Got home to find Mr. Valentine just leaving. He had spent the day with the boys. But he reconsidered and stayed until eleven. Mr. Valentine's caustic, cynical remarks and his shrewd, amusing comments on men and things are a relief after a day spent in listening to platitudes.

We went this afternoon to call on Mrs. Holbury and found one of the children, Sally, very ill with congestion, and they seem to have very little idea of nursing. The child is insensible and they are alternately begging and scolding her to take medicine.

Mrs. Holbury has a blessed disposition. She is living in a house half-finished, in the greatest disorder, with two servants who are worse than useless—one sick and the other contrary. The wife of an ugly itinerant preacher, she has four of the very homeliest children that ever worried a mother into frenzy. One of them was very sick, the fattest baby of three months, cross as a cat and the autocrat of the house from grandpa to little brother of three. With all these accumulated woes, she is as cheerful, gay, and seemingly as happy as though everything was moving on oiled wheels. "Her price is above rubies."

Mr. Valentine sent us some numbers of *Blackwood's Magazine*.²⁸

July 13: Mamma is in bed again today. Another grand hunt and the same ill luck. No deer brought home after several shots. Brother Coley went to the Bend with George Richards and got back just in time to ride out with me to enquire about Sally Holbury. We found her much better. A charming ten-mile ride. Ben Clarkson spent the night with the boys. He is very handsome, much like Hugh Dunlap. What a pity he is the son of an overseer. Alice Hardison spent the night with Sister.

²⁸ Established in Edinburg, Scotland, in 1817, this magazine had a wide circulation in America.

July 14: Hurried to get up, hurried to eat breakfast, and hurried to get off to church. Then, after riding seven miles and opening twelve gates, we found there would be no service, the minister, Mr. Snodgrass from Vicksburg, being sick and unable to come. Rested awhile in the church and on our return trip met several carriages going. Saw only Amelia Scott and her mother that we knew. Mrs. Scott as usual was very apologetic for not having called.²⁹ She has a pleasant, gracious manner. Amelia is one of my schoolmates, but we were never intimate. Every white person on the place went to church except Brother Walter.

When the plantation bell rings at night, the howling of the hounds here and at Mr. Curry's reminds us of My Brother and Mr. Curry. How they did love their dogs. Mr. Curry has not hunted since My Brother left. A long letter from My Brother, still at Richmond and worrying to be sent to the front.

July 17: Mamma and I went out Monday and took dinner with Mrs. Savage and went up in the afternoon to call on Mrs. Carson. I remained there until this evening. Mamma came out and spent the day. Had a delightful visit. It is a most hospitable home, complete in all its appointments—lovely gardens and orchards, an old place well taken care of with perfect service because of so many servants. We admire Dr. Carson greatly. He is such a humane master and good Christian. He has the minister to preach regularly to his Negroes, or if there is no minister, he or one of the boys reads a sermon, hymns, and the Bible to them every Sunday afternoon. And he has Sunday school for them. He raises plenty of fruit and vegetables for everybody on the place, and his quarter lot is the prettiest place, a great stretch of thick green turf dotted with great forest trees and a double row of two-room cabins shining with whitewash. It is the cleanest-looking place I ever saw. He is a good man. Mamma has the minister to preach to our Negroes when he can find time, but that is not as often as we wish.

²⁹ Mrs. Mary J. Scott, planter, was the mother of Amelia and Thomas.

We reached home at dusk and the boys were anxiously watching for us. The warmth of their welcome was increased when Webster handed out the basket of "Melicon's pears." Alas, "Mrs. Galloway," our neighborhood "Mrs. Partington."³⁰

Annie and Aunt Lucy are both sick and Sue reigns in the kitchen while Frank has to stir herself in the house.

July 18: Mamma and I made Brother Coley a pair of pants by 1 o'clock. She basted and I did the machine work. Read a horrible piece in *Blackwood's* on spontaneous combustion. He convinced me, as well as himself, that it is "a light that never was on sea or shore." After tea I wrote to My Brother and tried to write to Cousin Jenny, but the inquisitive cats and Brother Coley's teasing were too much for me. I went on the gallery where they were all sitting in time to hear Mamma and Mr. Newton's comments on Mr. Valentine, Jr. and Sr., and on Mrs. Curry.

The conclusion they arrived at seemed to be that Mr. Mark Valentine should leave his father to his fate, a lonely and unloved old age, for fear of being influenced by his father's views of life and religion. He is, we hear, an outspoken infidel and misanthrope and stands ill with his neighbors. But we do not know him and so do not let us judge him unseen. And do let his boy stay with him. As to Mrs. Curry, their decision was that she is either heartless or "feckless." The other day one of her children, Belia, was very sick. She looked at her and told the servants that she would have spasms when the fever went off, took her seat in the carriage, and drove off six miles to see Mrs. Holbury's sick child. Sure enough, Addie did have spasms, as Mrs. Curry predicted. And as Mrs. Curry was returning she met poor little Kate running in the sun in the middle of the hot, dusty road bareheaded to tell her mother little sister was so sick.

Brother Coley was over there this evening and Mrs. Curry told him Huldah was very, very sick and she had sent for

³⁰ Mrs. Partington is the central figure of humorous sketches by B. P. Shillaber (1814-90), author of *Life and Sayings of Mrs. Partington* (1854).

the doctor. "She did not want Huldah to die on her hands, she knew." She is funny.

Had such a fine variety of fruit at Dr. Carson's. Mr. McGregor from New Orleans is spending a few weeks at Dr. Carson's. We met him there last summer. He gives a very graphic description of affairs in the City. He is intelligent and talks well when he forgets there is a lady around, and he would be handsome if he were not so diffident. He was telling us the plan for blowing up the ship *Brooklyn* blockading the mouth of the river.³¹ The plan is to make a small tug entirely bomb and ball proof by covering her entirely with railroad iron corrugated, to run this little invincible right up to the ship, and to blow her up with a columbiad.³² It is a private enterprise but if successful the projector will receive a large sum from the government. I should not think they would live to come back.

July 19: Wrote to Uncle Johnny. Have been reading *Arthur and His Round Table*. He gives the impression of a henpecked Don Quixote. May like it better as I get on with it.

Servants are busy making jellies and pickles. Mamma rode over in the evening to see Huldah. Ashburn, Brother Walter, and I ate cantaloupes and practiced rifle shooting. Mr. Newton spends tonight and tomorrow on the river.

July 25: All just in from the gallery. The breeze as fresh, pure, and cool as the "Air that breathed o'er Eden," and the golden moon like a newborn world floats up beyond the trees, while sweet and clear rise the notes of "Bonnie Annie Laurie." A night of sweet and calm delight.

Mamma, Mr. Newton, and I have all been sick and Wednesday none of us could go to breakfast. So the disconsolate boys had it all their own way. Now we are all well again. The Negroes are sick by the dozen and have been all summer. Little Caroline, it is feared, will die. Now that they

³¹ The *Brooklyn* was part of the Federal Gulf Blockading Squadron formed early in 1861 to close Confederate ports.—*Battles and Leaders*, I, 13.

³² A heavy, smooth-bore, cast-iron cannon invented by Colonel George Bomford for use in the War of 1812.

are pulling fodder, it will put many more on the sick list. It is such hot work.

July 26: Received telegraphic accounts of our first pitched battle fought at Manassas Junction³³—our side victorious, of course. A reported loss of 3,000 for us and 7,000 for the Yankees. The losses we hope are exaggerated. Reported that Gen. [Winfield] Scott and Mr. Davis were in command. If Gen. Scott is defeated, it will make our victory more complete. My Brother and Uncle Bo may have been in the fight, but we hardly think so as on the thirteenth they were still in Richmond.

We, Mamma, Mr. Newton, and I, were just ready to ride out to Omega when Mrs. Hardison and her mother, Mrs. Alexander, drove up and soon after Mrs. Curry with her five oldest girls and Alice, Emma, and Bettie.

Ashburn's company was on dress parade on the lawn. Altogether the place seemed to be overflowing with people. As Brother Coley said, we would have had to drive over women and children to get out of the yard.

Yesterday as we were mounting to ride over the fields, Mr. Dobbs, Mr. Carson, and Mr. McGregor rode up. That pleasant ride was snipped short, but we spent a delightful evening until they bowed themselves away at eleven.

Told Mr. McGregor's fortune by his request and during the incantations I feared his face would blister from the heat of his blushes. I wonder why he is so afraid of innocent, harmless womenfolks? My faith in Joe's powers of persuasion is high. How did he ever induce Mr. McGregor to pay a social call when it is so painful to him?

Monday, sent through the rain to Dr. Carson for fruit for preserving, and Mamma has put up some beautiful figs and peaches and quantities of apple jelly. Letters from Kate and Julia. Kate had made herself sick drilling and Julia was sewing on wedding garments. Julia was to have waited on Miss Mary Barr on Tuesday. Have not heard from the wedding.

³³ The Battle of Bull Run or Manassas, fought in Virginia, July 21, 1861.

Saturday. The boys are scattered through the country. Ashburn has gone to drill the militia. He is doing well to have learned the manual so soon and to be able to drill the men. Mamma made Brother Walter's uniform and he wore it out to the drill. It is vastly becoming to him.

Sewed steadily most of the day to finish my organdy to wear to church tomorrow, but the boys say there will be no preaching. Our fourth Sunday without church.

Mamma and Mr. Newton rode to Omega yesterday morning and learned some of the details of the Manassas battle. It was gallantly fought and won. Poor Col. Bartow fell, banner in hand, rushing on so bravely.³⁴ Mr. Newton heard his brother George was in the fight but came through unharmed.

Tomorrow is a day of thanksgiving for victory. Mr. Newton leaves us for his home early Monday. He is busy tonight packing. How much we will all miss him.

July 30: We are all sorry for Dr. Lily. Sunday, he sent Mamma word that he was going on to Richmond to see his brother and would take any letter or message. Mamma had only time to write a short letter to My Brother, and Brother Coley started with it and met Dr. Lily at the gate, just starting on his way to Richmond. He had received a dispatch that his brother, a boy of seventeen, was dangerously wounded in the battle, and he was going on to be with him. All the gentlemen seem to be leaving for Richmond. Mr. Catlin sent us word that he would leave at once and we sent letters by him.

Brother Coley and I have postponed our trip to Vicksburg two days, expecting the Carson and Savage families on a visit, but they failed us. Early tomorrow we get off anyway. Both Ashburn and Jimmy are ailing today, and little Caroline died Sunday.

We were quite anxious about Johnny. He went out to spend the day with Charley Dancy, and when he did not return, Mamma sent out twice for him. Brother Walter at

³⁴ Colonel F. S. Bartow, former mayor of Savannah, commanded a Georgia regiment.

last met him jogging on home the next day with Charley, who will spend several days with him. Poor Charley. The visit is a doubtful pleasure to him. He looks a stranger in a strange land.

Aug. 24: I returned Tuesday after a three-week visit to Aunt Laura in Vicksburg. Came all alone in the carriage from DeSoto³⁵ and it took all day. The mules, a fine, fat pair, could not be made to go out of a walk. I found out later they had had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours, since leaving in fact. Webster, about nightfall and eight miles from home, confessed that the corn had been stolen and that he did not buy the mules any more. I would have stopped anywhere and had them fed had I known it in time. The long, long, weary day dragging along at a footpace, we were about two hours after dark—and it was pitch dark—coming through the woods. I was horribly afraid and I know Webster was worse frightened than I was, but he did his best to keep me from being scared. He would call to me every now and then through the carriage window, “We will soon be there, Miss Kate. We’s most through the woods. Ain’t nothing gwine hurt you.” I had been angry with him for starving the mules and thus throwing us in the night, but I forgave him when I saw how solicitous he was that I should not be frightened.

Did not reach home until nearly ten, much to the surprise of the family who had given us out. Ashburn was to have been with me but I left him sick at Vicksburg. Such an unhealthy season. Everybody in the house, but Brother Coley, has been sick since I left, and I was in bed nearly a week. It has been raining for three weeks and is cool enough for fall. Mr. McRae fears it will make the cotton crop light.

Chainey died of paralysis a few days ago. The place must indeed seem like a graveyard to the poor Negroes—so many deaths since we moved here. Clearing land and digging ditches may make it worse now.

³⁵ Located on the peninsula created by a hairpin turn in the Mississippi in front of Vicksburg, DeSoto was the landing place of the Vicksburg ferry and the eastern terminal of the Vicksburg, Shreveport, and Texas Railroad.

The ladies have organized a sewing society to meet at Goodrich's and I am on the soliciting committee.³⁶ Mrs. Hardison says she has been begging for me. I am afraid I will make a wretched solicitor. Shall ask for something else to do.

Had a quiet but pleasant visit in Vicksburg. Nothing but war news talked of and sewing societies being organized to sew and knit. Mamma is a famous knitter of socks and can knit one a day. So far I am only capable of knitting comforters³⁷ of crewel, but I shall advance to socks and gloves. I knitted nearly all the day coming from Vicksburg, for the slow pace did not interfere.

Aug. 25: Joe Carson and Robert spent the evening, and Dr. Devine dropped in rather late and rode home with them. Rather a tiresome visit, and I was glad to bow them out.

Johnny, Mamma, and I rode up to see how they were at Mrs. Hardison's. Mrs. Hardison and the baby both have fever, and Josa and the rest of the family look as if there was not an ounce of red blood between them—the whitest, weakest looking set of people. Saw the Nailors while in Vicksburg. Kate came in and spent the day with us at Aunt Sarah's, and Brother Coley and I went back with her and spent two or three days. It is very quiet and dull in that neighborhood this summer. Frank Nailor is back. He found he could do no soldiering as a private with one arm. He told us much about camp life and Brother and Uncle Bo. Uncle Bo is perfectly happy in camp now. He likes the free kind of life, roughing it.

Kate spent the day before I left in Vicksburg with me and a busy day it was. We took Jessie and Horace to have their pictures taken which kept us until nearly dinner time. They were not good and Aunt Sarah sent them back. Wound wool and went over to Mrs. Butt's to get them to "put on" a comforter for Kate to knit. It is to be for Brother, just like the one I am making for Uncle Bo.

After dinner Kate, Ashburn, and I went in the carriage to the levee to see the Swamp Rangers, Capt. Kup and Capt.

³⁶ These organizations made uniforms for local military units.

³⁷ A kind of woolen muffler.

Sweet's artillery company, embark on their way to the front.³⁸ All the military companies in town escorted them down to the river and there was a great crowd. But the boats did not get off until the next morning. We saw the last leave-takings as we crossed on the ferry. Waving a farewell, we drove up to see the Southern's Co. B drill, then back to Aunt Laura's, and Kate started home. It was high time with an eight-mile ride over those hills. Aunt Laura and I then rushed into our best bib and tucker and paid three calls before dark. The three Miss Butts came over and spent the evening, and when we did get to bed we were tired out.

Kate and I went to the Episcopal church to see the last sad honors paid to Mr. William Cowan. He was buried with military and Masonic honors, one of the victims of the war. Death claimed him in the prime of life before he could fire one shot for his country.

Aunt Sarah complains so much of loneliness and is so afraid to be alone that I would have remained longer with her, but I was anxious about Mamma and the boys. There is so much sickness.

Aug. 28: Do I hear it raining again tonight? After three weeks of it and two bright days, it is too discouraging. From the middle of January all through the winter, most of the spring, and now most of the summer, have the heavens rained down upon us, and we are sick and tired of the mud and gloom. The boys go out and get wet, often several times a day. Brother Coley says he has not been really dry for three weeks, but we with our long dragging skirts are prisoners.

Plaiting palmetto for baskets has been the rage for several days. Jimmy and I made one for him to carry for muscadines and persimmons. It, being our first, is rather odd as to shape and we call it the Brokenburn style. Nothing new to read and so I knit and plait and study a little. Ashburn and I dispute over the pronunciation of Spanish, which we have commenced studying.

I have slight chills and fevers and am being dosed on

³⁸ Military units organized in Vicksburg.

bitters and drugs of varied meanness. There is danger of congestion or swamp fever at this season.³⁹

Wrote to Uncle Johnny, Cousin Jenny, and Mrs. Rossman. Sometime since, there was a letter from Virginia. No startling war news.

Mr. Abe Curry is home on furlough. He was in the battle at Springfield, Mo., and he was twice knocked down but unwounded. Wish he would come over and tell us his adventures.

Aug. 30: Mamma and Johnny are both in bed. Two lovely, dry days. Thank God for his sunshine.

Brother Walter has gone to Vicksburg to stay a few weeks with poor lonely Aunt Sarah. She cannot be reconciled to staying alone in the house with the children, though she can almost touch the houses of her neighbors on each side.

Mamma and I, after knitting awhile, went to work on the boys' uniform shirts. I did the machine stitching, but Mamma soon broke down and went to bed with a chill. Johnny was tossing with fever, Jimmy was reading on a gallery littered with our different work, Ashburn was extolling his new cartridge box, and Brother Coley was busy about dinner which he is overseeing while Mr. McRae is sick, when up rode Mr. Kaiser and Robert. Presto-change! Mamma declared her chill off and got up, Ashburn put away his wonderful box, Brother Coley forgot his grievances about a late dinner and went to receive them, Sister ran off to direct dinner, I switched into my room to dress, all the servants stopped to stare, and Jimmy alone remained quiescent—reading on.

They stayed until sunset. I played chess with Mr. Kaiser. He beat me well the first game; the second was a draw, though I must think I had the advantage. After they left, Mamma went back to bed and Jimmy, Sister, and I walked up to Mr. Hardison's over such great hard clods. All the sick there are improving except Henry, who is still quite ill.

The two Mr. Currys and Mr. Hardison made us a long

³⁹ The chills and fever mentioned so many times hereafter was malaria, variously known as intermittent, congestive, billious, or swamp fever.

visit yesterday. Mr. Abe Curry gives an interesting account of his campaign in Missouri and the battle of Springfield ⁴⁰ but says fully half of the people are opposed to us. He thinks the army there will suffer for clothes and shoes when the winter sets in.

Mr. Hardison was kind in collecting the school fund for Mamma.

Aug. 31: A long interesting letter from My Brother of the thirteenth. They are still at Manassas. A short one from Kate detailing her trials with the comforter. It is a failure and *mon cher frère* must go comfortless this winter for all Kate can do. Ashburn and Brother Coley go out to drill in the cavalry company at Goodrich's. Mamma and Mrs. Hardison exchange omelette soufflés and peaches, both of them too unwell to enjoy anything eatable, but we well ones made way with the peaches.

Sept. 1: Brother Coley, Sister, and I went to church at Willow Bayou over the worst roads that could be in the summer, a succession of big dry clods, and per consequence I am too tired to sit up another minute. Mamma and Johnny are about well at last. I am sitting under the bar, sleepy and tired, with the countless stings of mosquitoes smarting on my body and their steady ferocious hum sounding in my ears.

Brother Coley and I attempted a game of chess, but all kinds of bugs held high carnival around us. I was soon vanquished and we retired from the gallery and sounded the retreat to bed earlier than usual. Joe Carson came out yesterday and spent the night. And all of them went hunting but killed no deer, though Joe in the ardor of the chase went in water up to his neck. Mrs. Alexander and the two little girls spent today with us. Ashburn went to the Bend Monday and brought us back an account of the concert to be given there for the benefit of the Milliken's Bend Guards. Only eight girls and Ashburn took dinner with Mrs. Reading that day—to keep her from feeling lonesome.

Mamma and I went out to the sewing society, formed that

⁴⁰ Springfield (Wilson's Creek and Oak Hills), Mo., August 10, 1861.

day of Mrs. Carson and ourselves, and decided to get Mr. Hardison to write for material to work on. Then we went down to tell Mrs. Goodrich, who was too unwell to attend. Met Miss Springer and Miss Tabitha Scarborough, from Lake Providence. Miss Scarborough is Mrs. Goodrich's niece and is quite pretty with lovely dark eyes.

Lunched with Mrs. Carson and returned to find Sister with high fever and Aunt Lucy bathing her head. Were glad we had not waited until evening to come home in the cool.

We hear of the capture of Fort Hatteras ⁴¹ and the proclamation of martial law in Missouri.

We finished Ashburn and Brother Coley's uniforms this week. Mr. M. C. Williams gave Brother Coley a nice belt and rosette. Finished *The House of the Seven Gables* and did not like it much. Shall not care to read it again. Now *The Marble Faun*, I can read again and again.⁴² The rain came down in torrents last night, stopping our projected visit to the Bend.

Sister, Johnny, and Jimmy have been on the sick list today and this evening Ashburn went to bed with cold and fever. Mamma has just finished piecing up a large quilt commenced by my Auntie oh! so many years ago.

This evening we rode down in a light shower to see how Mrs. McRae and Bettie were getting on, Mamma in a riding skirt of rags and tatters and I in a calico dress and the remains of my old green habit. We dashed up to the gallery in grand style, whipping up to escape the rain, when who should step up to help us off but Dr. Lily, the last person I would have expected. He had been sent for to see Bettie. As usual he was just coming down to see us. I wonder how we hurt his little feelings that he never comes now? Commenced knitting a sock but it is too complicated for my head. Shall confine myself to gloves and comforters. I am all right there.

All the boys and I went yesterday to the quarterly meeting at the new Methodist church this side of Goodrich's. Mr.

⁴¹ Fort Hatteras, N. C., August 28-29, 1861.

⁴² Novels by Nathaniel Hawthorne, published in 1851 and 1860 respectively.

White preached a sermon insufferably old and irritating—the fall of Rome, Napoleon, and autumn his themes.

Little Sister is still sick.

Sept. 10: Jimmy and I went to Milliken's Bend Saturday and I returned today. Visited Julia Reed at Mrs. Reading's and saw a number of the girls before the concert for the benefit of the soldiers. It came off on Monday evening. It went off splendidly, most of the girls we know being performers. Mary Gustine looked beautiful. She is the handsomest girl in the parish and has an excellent voice, which she has just recently discovered, and is now taking singing lessons. Miss Carrie Lowry and Judge Byrnes took quite prominent parts, but the fun of the evening was Mr. Tip Sebastian's "Bob Ridley," and "Happy Land of Canaan." Joe Boyer's "The Bonnie Blue Flag" and chorus made a great hit—a new war song.⁴³ Mamma and some of the boys came in the evening of the concert. We made the acquaintance of Mrs. Maher, Miss Carrie Lowry, Mr. Campbell, Mrs. Coney Morancy, Mrs. Bence, Miss Orr, Mrs. Reading's sister, and Mr. Al Lowry, oh! such a curious little fellow.⁴⁴ Ashburn's cold and the long ride put him to bed today with fever.

Papers this evening. No reliable war news. See Mr. Chapin of Vicksburg has been arrested up North and is imprisoned in Fort Lafayette. Letter from My Brother says he has been on detached duty for a month working and sometimes has had only four hours sleep out of the twenty-four. He wished to return to his company but was highly complimented from headquarters and retained.

I just finished a blue and stone colored comforter for Mr. Reading and shall knit a gay warm effect of some green and scarlet wool just received from Vicksburg.

The ladies of the Bend have established a society for the

⁴³ Written by Harry B. MacCarthy at Jackson, Miss., early in 1861. Sung at the New Orleans Academy of Music in September, 1861, before soldiers on the way to Virginia, it immediately became popular.—Richard B. Harwell, *Confederate Music* (Chapel Hill, 1950), 56-59.

⁴⁴ Alfred J. Lowry, planter, came to Carroll Parish before 1835. He had a large family.

relief of the soldiers. They are in earnest and are working right along.

Samples of winter goods from Barriér in New Orleans came today. We bought only calicoes but got some nice soft materials for the boys and Sister.

Sept. 13: Thought we heard cannon firing in Vicksburg this afternoon. We must have gained another victory. God grant it may be a bloodless one for this household. Ashburn is almost sick with either whooping cough or a fearful cold. Mamma is unwell but busy making her dress. Made Jimmy's plait into a small basket to give to Lou Hardison, he says. Made John one and he often brings it in full of muscadines or wild grapes. All of us like wild grape lemonade, especially if feverish. There is generally a pile of the fruit heaped on a side table, and the boys make and drink lemonade all during the day.

Busy sewing on the machine. Made a dress and hemmed three dozen towels the other day. Have my knitting for steady work. Jimmy is hard at work knitting a white yarn necktie. He made his own needles. Ashburn made a beautiful, polished pair for me.

There are some great Negroes on the place. Mr. McRae found a barrel of pork in the cotton field and another barrel that had been opened and the meat taken. As pork foots up \$35 per barrel, the stealing is trying.

Went riding in the woods with Johnny, Jimmy, and Ashburn. Wonka was in high feather and went like the wind—so delightful. On our return we found Mr. Catlin sitting on his horse at the end of the gallery, making a call on Mamma. Mr. Abe Curry is getting up a subscription to pay his way back to the army. Brother Coley and Ashburn gave \$5. It seems to me that if he cannot pay his own way, he should stay with his command and not take trips. All the money is needed to equip soldiers.

Sept. 16: Johnny and I, he bestride an ambling mule and I on my good steed Wonka, went out to Omega this afternoon to buy flannel. Could get only red for Brother's under-

clothes and did not get enough of that. Will have to finish the set with yellow. Could not get one of the things for My Brother in New Orleans. All winter furnishings for soldiers sold out they wrote us.

Mamma has been unwell for the last three days, but she has knitted a sock a day and not seemed busy. Her grandmother, Mrs. Ann Bohanan, taught her when she was a little girl and the knowledge comes in most usefully now. She has taught so many people of late. We have finished two calico dresses for Mamma.

We fear Ashburn, Jimmy, and Johnny all have whooping cough. Ashburn must have taken it in Vicksburg, though he had it when a little fellow. There are seventeen little cribs of Negroes to have it in the quarters and Mamma dreads it getting among them. Thus the house is under strict quarantine.

It is rumored that Spain has recognized us as a nation. Hurrah! for Spain.

Sept. 18: Twelve at night and I am so tired I can hardly sit up a minute longer.

We were hard at work until sundown on Brother's flannels. As it will be so cold and he suffers so even here in the winter—he is so sensitive to the cold—we are making the shirts and drawers double, red on one side and yellow on the other. They look funny to me but are real warm. I wonder if he will like them.

Mamma, Johnny, Ashburn, and I went out late for a short ride and stopped to see them weigh cotton—the highest 165 pounds. Joe Carson and a teacher, a New Yorker, were on the gallery when we returned. The teacher is looking for a situation. They did not stay very late after supper. Sister and the three boys rouse the echoes with their coughing.

Amelia Scott and Charley spent yesterday with us. Charley is a pleasant, nice looking young fellow. Other Pa [Grandfather Ragan] came quite unexpectedly Monday on his first visit for some months. He is looking well. We are luxuriating on home grown fruit of the finest variety, persimmons growing just a few steps from the back fence in the pasture.

Sept. 19: Nearly everybody in the house is complaining. Other Pa and Mamma should be in bed. I am knitting a pair of gloves for Brother and earnestly desired to finish one today. Worked faithfully until 9 o'clock and then gave up for the night. Mamma started on the mate to mine this afternoon and will finish before I do. It is a laborious work to me and she does it with such ease. The long fingers are such a trial to get right. Fortunately, they are easy to rip. Shall I ever have courage to attempt another pair?

All the boys are at work knitting with bones except Brother Coley and he is ambitious to learn. Other Pa learned when he was a little boy and has taught them, and he has knitted a complete glove today with long fingers. The gloves are for the soldiers and we are leaving the ends of the fingers open so that they can handle their guns well. Brother Coley went to the Bend but brought no news, warlike or gossipy.

Sept. 20: The family all were sewing and knitting all day. We finished My Brother's gaudy underwear. I only hope he may have the hardihood to wear them. We, all together, have finished two pairs of gloves and all are busy on others.

Sept. 25: Have a dreadful cold and am hoarse and out of sorts generally. Julia Reed and Anna Dobbs are with us. We went out to the sewing society yesterday, took dinner with Mrs. Carson, and brought Anna back with us. Collected materials to fill a hospital box which Mr. Goodrich will pack and send this week. Spent today pleasantly with the Morris girls.⁴⁵ Still feel a little overshadowed by Julia and Missie. What a gay, rapid talker Julia is. Got home just in time for supper, a little after dark. Anna and Brother Coley played hullgull.⁴⁶ Julia played, dozing on the sofa, with a running accompaniment of quarreling with Brother Walter. Mamma and I rested until early bedtime at ten.

⁴⁵ The Morrises lived on Bending Willow Plantation on Willow Bayou. Mrs. Minerva Morris, widow and planter, was the mother of daughters Virginia, Louisiana (Lou), Mississippi (Missie), and Missouri (Zou), and sons, Stafford and Henry.

⁴⁶ A game in which one player guesses at the number of beans or the like held in the closed hand of another player.

We were very busy Saturday and Monday packing the box for Brother and Uncle Bo. Besides the clothes, we sent quantities of preserves, cakes, and other eatables that will keep. Mrs. Hardison, Mrs. McRae, and Mrs. Carson all sent preserves and pickles to go in the box. I sat up until after twelve Saturday night finishing off a comforter for Lt. Floyd. We do not know him, only that he is a soldier, and while at work on his comforter we got a letter saying, "Please send something in my box for Lt. Floyd. He is from Kentucky and can get nothing from his family, and no one has sent him a thing." So I was glad I had started the comforter for him. Mamma sent him gloves and socks and a message that the eatables were as much for him as our boys.

Dr. Lily called last night, and so we are again on his visiting list.

Sept. 27: Mr. Newton could not return as he has joined the army. Mamma put an advertisement in one of the Richmond papers for a tutor, and already the answers are coming in. Some only amusing. One innocent of either grammar or spelling.

Julia and I spent yesterday and part of today at Mrs. Savage's. Were to take dinner at Mrs. Carson's and return this evening on horseback escorted by Brother Coley, Joe Carson, Robert, and Mr. Kaiser, but while on our way to Mrs. Carson's, we met Brother Coley and Lem Gustine. Lem had come for Julia, as her mother was quite ill, and so we drove on home. After a hasty dinner at three, Julia went on. We were to have had such a nice time visiting, thrashing pecan trees, receiving visitors, riding, and fishing. Had a nice visit, barring my throat being so hoarse that I could only speak in a whisper. It is our first cool day and we rode out in lightest summer muslins. Fortunately, we had wraps with us.

Mamma is in bed with fever. Wesley's arm was almost crushed off in the gin—broken in three places. Dr. Lily set it and thinks he can save it.

No mail this week, but a rumor that 12,000 Federalists have taken possession of Mississippi City. That is bringing the war near us. How we wish the authorities could carry

the war into Washington City. What an awful responsibility rests on our statesmen and generals. May God give them wisdom.

Sept. 29: Mamma, Johnny, and Brother Walter have been in bed the last two days with hard chills and fevers. A quiet day, except for the sick. Ashburn and I walked through the garden and through wreaths of love vine. If it grows and our wishes comes true, we will have strong faith in some old superstitions.

A Sabbath spent in our own indulgence instead of God's service—a platitude, but how hard it is to be good for any length of time.

Telegraphic news of a victory at Lexington, Mo., where 5,000 men, stores, and \$250,000 were captured.⁴⁷ May it be true.

All the sick in the house are up again. Much sickness on the place. We went yesterday to the sewing society. All members were present. Got a little work to do, a dozen pillow cases. Made them this morning. Mamma, Ashburn, and Mr. Cavalier each contributed a bolt of domestic, and we cut it out and distributed it to be made.

Brother Coley and I went after pecans yesterday. Brought back quite a lot, but they are rather too green yet awhile. The boys are still whooping like wild Indians with the cough.

Mr. Catlin called this morning. Thinks Dr. Devine will soon be married to Miss Spann of Mississippi. Rumors of skirmishes but no pitched battles. Brother Coley is out at the Bend. The girls are to give a concert at Richmond next Monday. Hope we can go.

Many answers from teachers.

Oct. 3: Finished the ugliest calico dress I ever possessed and without assistance too. Mamma, Sister, Brother Walter, Ashburn, and I took the loveliest ride this evening.

Oct. 4: All enjoyed a most glorious dash through the rain this evening. Had gone up to thrash a pecan tree near Mr. Hardison's when the shower came up and we raced home.

⁴⁷ Lexington, Mo., September 12-20, 1861.

All breakfasted this morning at sunup so that Brother Coley and Ashburn could get an early start to Willow Bayou to drill. Commenced another Zouave jacket to wear at home.⁴⁸ Mamma is busy cutting out the boys' and Sister's clothes. Jimmy suffers so with the cough. He looks so disconsolate sitting holding his head by the hours.

Went over to see Mrs. Curry about Miss Blankenship of Virginia who has been writing for the position of governess. Mrs. Curry will perhaps take her as they have no teacher. We are anxious about a teacher ourselves. The boys are wishing to be in school again, especially Brother Coley and Ashburn. They say they are losing so much time, as they are sure this will be their last year in the schoolroom.

Oct. 7: Mamma is busy basting for the seamstress. I finished the red and white comforter for Capt. Peck, and it will go to him tomorrow in a box being sent his company from the Bend. I did not want to give such a pretty comforter to him, but then he was an old friend of our Father—and a soldier.

Jimmy finished his comforter and we will take it in the morning with a number of articles made by Mrs. Curry, Mrs. McRae, and ourselves out to the sewing society. Little Kate Curry has knitted a pair of socks for the soldiers. Quite an achievement for such a small girl.

Dr. Lily waylaid us wandering through the garden and we chatted out there until dark. Dr. Devine is to be married next Thursday. Dr. Lily is going and will report on the bride's dress and bring us a piece of dream cake. We would like to attend a wedding occasionally but have no chance.

Expected Mrs. Savage's and Mrs. Carson's families out today and had many dainties for their regalement, but 'twas "love's labor lost."

The rain last night, the gloomy day, and the illness of Mrs. Savage and Anna Nicholson prevented their coming. No news. The rumor of an attack on Washington was false.

⁴⁸ *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, XXIV (February, 1862), 432, carried a fashion plate showing a lady's Zouave jacket. The note said, "Zouave jackets are now much in favor, and any fancy in relation to their form or material may be safely indulged."

My Brother's regiment is the only one now guarding Manassas Junction. Mr. McRae is quite sick and Brother Walter is overseeing. Brother Coley has the cough and cannot go among the Negroes.

Oct. 8: Mamma, Sister, and I went out this morning to the sewing society. Not many present and only the twenty-five yards of cloth sent by Ashburn to be cut out and given to be made. Spent the balance of a very pleasant day at Mrs. Savage's. Thekla Norris is with them now. She has a cute little baby. Annie and Emily are sweet children. Got home after dark to a roomful of boys and a cheerful fire.

Hear that Gen. Fremont has been cashiered for his battles lost in Missouri and that Gens. McClellan and Rosecrans are severely wounded.⁴⁹ Mail today, but no papers. Only four letters from teachers.

Oct. 10: Mamma sent some pickles and I sent my last comforter, knitted of the odds and ends, out to Mrs. Carson to be put in a box she is sending to Lt. Clark, a Northern man in a New Orleans company. . . .

Anna and Thekla called this morning. They could not spend the day as Thekla had to get back to the baby. Babies must be an awful nuisance at times.

Most of the boys were out hunting until after dinner. Mr. Ewing came back with Brother Coley from the militia drill and took tea. Saw Mr. Hardison about my subscription paper. He will send it around to collect for me. Mamma and two or three of the boys are complaining.

Oct. 12: Mamma is sick again with slight fever, and Jimmy is in bed with the cough and fever. Malvina has a little girl. Hope she will have better luck than with her others. She has lost two. Brother Walter, Sister, and I were

⁴⁹ General J. C. Fremont was the Federal commander of the Western Department, with headquarters in St. Louis. His forces had suffered several reverses, and he had lost favor with Lincoln when he attempted to emancipate slaves in his department. He was relieved early in November.—J. G. Randall, *Lincoln, the President* (New York, 1945), II, 16-23. George B. McClellan and W. S. Rosecrans were Federal generals in western Virginia; the reports of their being wounded were false.

just preparing to go to Mr. Hardison's and assist in a pecan hunt when Dr. "Tiger" Lily was announced and knocked my part of the frolic into pie. The others went, but surely we had a pleasant afternoon. He brought the wedding cake, Dr. Devine's, I made him a dream list, and he is to tell me the favored girl when he comes again.⁵⁰

Johnny brought the mail. Letters from teachers and a long letter to Mamma from Fellowes & Co. wishing a list of everything she will need for the house and quarters next year, as they wish to make early arrangement to supply their customers. A long letter from My Brother. He is assistant provost marshal at the head of twenty-five men ferreting out spies and hunting up deserters. The idea of men deserting from the Southern Army! He writes in high spirits.

Joe Carson spent the night and all went hunting. Mackey Fontaine killed the deer, his second this week. We are tired of venison. News of a victory for us at Santa Rosa Island and the repulse of "Billy Wilson" and his "forty thieves"⁵¹—reports of skirmishes and small battles wherever there are armies, except the Army of the Potomac.

Oct. 15: No preaching at either church. Mamma is too unwell to go anyway. Mr. Holbury's little girl was very ill with spasms, and her father was so frightened that without testing the heat he put her in a tub of scalding water. She is dreadfully burned and it is doubtful whether she will recover, though it did end the spasms. Monday, Mamma was still in bed and I am ashamed to confess what a bad humor I was in worrying over a pair of trousers that would not be made right. I do not think Brother Walter will like the fit. How trying and ugly to make boys clothes are.

This morning Mamma felt better and so we went out to

⁵⁰ "A slice of bride cake . . . laid under the head of an unmarried man or woman will make them dream of their future wife or husband."—*Encyclopedia of Superstitions*, ed. E. and M. A. Redford (New York, 1949), 48.

⁵¹ Confederate forces under General R. H. Anderson attacked the camp of Colonel William Wilson's 6th New York Zouave Regt. on Santa Rosa Island, Fla., on the night of October 9. Part of the camp was burned before Federal reinforcements from Fort Pickens arrived and the Confederates withdrew.—*Battles and Leaders*, I, 32.

the meeting of the sewing society and took the purple comforter I had just finished. Called on Mrs. Carson and took dinner at Mrs. Savage's, meeting Mrs. Owen, her niece from Delhi, Mr. Catlin, and Miss Narcisse Morgan. Miss Morgan and her sister have recently returned from a long sojourn in the North, educated there. I think their place is just below Mrs. Savage's. She is homely but self-confident, dresses well, and has Northern manners and accent. Met Dr. Devine while returning dressed in all his "braws" and looking most happy. Mrs. Carson gave Mamma plants of sweet olive, *magnolia fuscata* and purple magnolia. We are so pleased to get these favorite plants. She has been most kind and is very lovable.

Annie Nicholson is ill again and so thin and white "she looks one of the dim shades." We are invited out Thursday to meet the Tibbetts family.

Oct. 17: Too rainy yesterday for our visitors to venture out and too bad today for us to go to Mrs. Savage's. Busy all day sewing on the boys' trousers, a dress for Sister, and altering an old silk. Between times I am knitting a pair of gloves for My Brother. Lt. Williams is home on furlough and Mamma will send a box to My Brother and Uncle Bo by him.

Mamma has put off her visit until next Monday and I fear she will not get off at all. For four weeks she has kept us all stirred up expecting her to get off every few days. Now no one is much sick and Mr. McRae is at work again, looking ghostly. She can be spared now. We will try to have her make the "big go" Monday. Have taken up some plants to keep in the house, geraniums, mignonette, violets.

Have slept on my paper and dreamed my best but to no purpose, "nobody coming to marry me, nobody coming to woo."⁵²

No war news and no teacher. It is late for the boys to be out of school. Brother Walter is still helping Mr. McRae.

My Brother is a good son for he recently sent Mamma \$50. He must have deprived himself. She will keep it for him when he returns. Oh! to see him.

⁵² See note 50.

Oct. 19: What a joyous evening to us all. My Brother came—a complete surprise to us all. Sent home on sick furlough. He has had typhoid fever for a month and as soon as convalescent the surgeon sent him home. He looks taller and has lost forty pounds. Home life and love will soon build him up. He came at dusk. We have kept him talking until eleven, and that was not wise, as of course he is tired. He told us many funny anecdotes of his experiences as assistant provost marshal. He likes the marshal exceedingly. How horrible is the idea of the visitors to the Manassas battlefield rifling the graves of Northern soldiers for mementoes. They should be put in the front ranks of the next battle. It is positively ghoulish. Johnny went out for the mail and brought My Brother instead. Mr. Bledsoe kindly sent him out in his buggy. Our heartfelt thanks go up to God for having returned to us our best beloved brother.

Oct. 21: My Brother is improving and held quite a levee today. Mr. and Mrs. Hardison came yesterday. Mr. Curry, Mr. Selser in the morning. Mr. Valentine spent the day. Dr. Carson came. Dr. Lily took tea. Mr. Hardison as sensible, Mrs. Hardison as independent, Mr. Selser as dry, Mr. Curry as talkative, Dr. Carson as earnest and pleasant, and Mr. Valentine as cynical and amusing as always—all so interested in everything pertaining to the war, every detail or amusing incident of camp life.

Early this morning Brother rode over the place. He says it is in excellent order and a better crop than he anticipated. Mr. McRae crept up to see Brother this evening, the first time he has been out for weeks. He thinks the boys have had whooping cough too long to give it to My Brother, should he be liable to it. Tom and Felix commenced on the servants' rooms today, the house to be in the yard just opposite the kitchen. Mamma wrote to engage Mr. Wilkinson from Virginia as teacher. None of us will ever like another teacher as well as Mr. Newton.

Frank Nailor is at last married. The bride, Miss Mary Gee, is a neighbor of theirs and quite an heiress. Suppose

Kate waited on them. She will write me the particulars. Many have been his sweethearts and *affaires de cœur*.

Lou West (Mrs. Schultz) is dead. A bright intellect and a kind, warm heart has ceased to be. I saw her when I was last in Vicksburg and she was looking so strong and well. She was always a picture of health and vigor. She was married less than a year ago. The killing of Mr. Lake by Mr. Chambers was a very sad and unnecessary affair—a street fight or duel, we have not known which.

Oct. 22: Mr. A. Richardson, Mr. Drew, and Ben Clarkson were here this morning and we expected and prepared for Mrs. Savage and Mrs. Carson's families. Several are sick so that they could not come, and so we may eat our dinner with Mr. Valentine's assistance. The boys have been thrashing and cutting pecan trees and have brought in lots of nuts. We hate for them to cut the trees. Shall stop it.

My Brother is a bright yellow, even the skin of his head, like an orange or a pumpkin, and Dr. Lily has prescribed sugar cane for him. He is to eat all of it he can. Dr. Carson sent him a wagonload of it by the wagon that carried out the cotton that Mamma and others subscribed to the sewing society.

Oct. 24: Brother and many others went hunting early this morning, the first frost of the season whitening the grass, but not enough even to kill the cotton. Jimmy killed the deer, his first victim after so many trials. Johnny and I followed the dogs for some distance. The chase is certainly exciting sport. No wonder men like it so.

Ashburn, Sister, Johnny, and I were all out after pecans when we heard the dogs coming, and Johnny and I joined the chase for a mile or two—a delightful dash.

Brother Coley, Sister, Johnny, and two of the house servants had chills today. Do hope frost will stop the sickness. Joe Carson spent the evening and is staying the night. He is charmed to have beaten me two games of chess.

Mamma had carpets put down yesterday and today with Aunt Lucy doing most of the superintending. Mrs. Hardison,

Lou, Alice, and George spent yesterday. Mr. Valentine and Dr. Lily failed to come. No war news.

Oct. 28: Today is but a catalogue of chills. Ashburn and Brother Coley shivered through the morning and burned all the evening. Timely doses of quinine kept them off Sister and Johnny. Sister has been sick since Friday and Mamma had Dr. Lily for her. Charles and Sarah are up today and Lucy and Frank down.

My Brother went out this evening to see Dr. Carson. His appetite is better and he is gaining strength.

They are digging potatoes today. Promises to be a noble lot. Annie is helping Uncle Hoccles gather the goober peas [peanuts]. It looks like a month's job for him. Jimmy and I made some pecan and pull candy this evening and I wish we had not. Brother Walter teased and worried us, and we all got tired of it and appealed to Mamma when Brother Walter flew into one of his unreasoning rages (fortunately such attacks are rare) and behaved so badly that we have all been uncomfortable ever since. He is the only one of my brothers I ever thought really needed punishing and the only one I ever feel like quarreling with. I believe he is the brightest of all the boys, converses so well, has Mamma's gift in that, and looks more like her than any of her children.

Mrs. Savage and Mrs. Carson came out at 1 o'clock Saturday just as Frank was setting the table. We did not care to give them "pot luck," and so dinner was put off until three and was then quite a spread. Their visit was primarily to My Brother and oh! the dozens of questions Mrs. Carson thought up to ask him.

Anna Dobbs has gone out to Tensas Bayou with Thekla, and Mrs. Savage will go out there tomorrow on a visit. She will bring one of her nieces back to live with her and to go to school.

Nov. 5: We have all been busy with sick people and visitors. Tuesday we sent the carriage for Mrs. Reading, Julia Reed, and the children and servants. All came just as dinner had been cleared away and another had to be cooked

right away. Talking and knitting were the order of the afternoon.

Julia, Johnny, and I mounted our steeds in the early, frosty morning air and cantered off to the woods in search of woodsy treasures—pecans, persimmons, and grapes. We so enjoyed the ride, the woods, and the bright fall weather that we did not get home until nearly dinner time. After supper euchre and knitting occupied us until bedtime. Oh! the socks and gloves that we have made! Mrs. Reading's little girls, Sally and Jenny, are having a gay, good time and seldom stop eating.

Nov. 8: Thursday was a lovely, cool day. Mrs. Reading, Julia, Jimmy, and I were just starting to get Mrs. Hardison—all to go on a long delightful ride through the woods—when Mrs. Curry with Mary, Huldah, and George drove up and spent the day. So farewell to our riding frolic. In the afternoon Julia, Ashburn, and I excused ourselves, as we had a previous engagement, and rode out to Dr. Carson's with our horses tangled with cockleburs, but we were too late to have them pulled. The cockleburs are such a nuisance in the fall. We arrived just at dark, taking Mrs. Carson by surprise—a *pleasant* surprise she assured us—and as hospitable as they are, I hope it was true. We certainly had a pleasant time, though the saddle had rubbed me so I felt half flayed.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bailey were there and stayed until after tea. She is very pretty, a Natchez girl. Came home the next evening escorted by Johnny and Joe Carson. Though the day was "cold and dark and dreary," we had a gay gallop home.

Saturday Julia awoke with a chill and Mrs. Reading and the children went home, leaving Julia to our tender mercies. I made a little basket for Jenny that Mamma had promised her sometime, and she prevailed on her mother to wait for two hours while I worked and finished it.

Joe and the boys went hunting, Robert came back from the drill with Ashburn, and Mary Gustine came in the carriage on its return from the Bend. Julia got up to supper and we all had a gay evening with songs, music, and games.

Sunday we all went to church out at the new church and heard a good sermon preached to a very good congregation.

Monday, although Julia swallowed quantities of quinine and imbibed hot tea all day and covered up in bed under piles of blankets, she had a chill just the same and was quite sick. Mary, the boys, and I were up until half past twelve. My Brother and all the boys went out to the election of state and parish officers. Tuesday Julia was much better and insisted on going home to see her mother, who has just returned from a visit of several weeks in New Orleans. So she and Mary Gustine got off in the carriage about eleven, and Mr. Valentine came over at twelve to spend the day, thinking both of the girls would be here. Mrs. Hardison stopped for a few minutes at the gate and said they did nothing at the sewing society.

Wednesday My Brother and the boys went to Goodrich's to the Presidential election. Davis was unanimously elected, not an opposing vote.⁵³ He was the only candidate. Will any other candidate ever have such an easy run over the presidential race track? For six long years President Davis may rest secure as the head and front of our grand young nation. My Brother spent the night with Mr. Valentine, and the boys took supper at Dr. Carson's.

Thursday afternoon Theresa and Mollie Bass called. Could not induce My Brother to come in and of course they wanted to see him. He said he was too busy having the sugar cane primed to plant next spring. Theresa is looking exceedingly pretty and Mollie is improving wonderfully in looks.

Friday My Brother thought he would go to the Bend to see Mary Gustine and Julia. But when he sent for his horse, the boys were just starting on a hunt, and this temptation was so strong that "he just went to the dogs" and galloped off in the chase. We were sitting, in the evening, on the back gallery enjoying the brilliant moonlight and quietly talking when someone telegraphed from the kitchen, "Company at

⁵³ In February, 1861, the Montgomery convention had chosen Jefferson Davis as provisional President for one year. In November, elections were held for permanent officers, and Davis was elected on a permanent basis.

the front door," and we heard subdued whispering at the horse rack. Instantly rose smothered cries for Frank, Webster, and lights—not a light was in the house—and earnest appeals to someone to run to the front door, which on being opened discovered Anna Dobbs, Joe Carson, Robert, and Mr. Bowman. They said they had been knocking a long time and had about concluded that we had all gone to bed or were away. Soon all were collected—candles, visitors, and family—and after awhile supper was served. Spent the evening playing games, telling fortunes, and chatting until the young men made their bows at eleven. Anna and I had a long bedroom talk and we were late getting to sleep.

Nov. 9: This morning Anna, Johnny, Jimmy, Brother Coley, and I rode out to Omega. Jimmy was going for buttons for My Brother's shirts and we were going only "a piece" with him. But the roads, the weather—it misted on us all the way—and the fine condition of our horses tempted us on, and we went all the way, returning by Winn Forest in search of grapes and pecans. Got enough to eat on our way back. Rode up at a sweeping gallop. We had not spared our horses all the way but it was too cool a day to hurt them. Wonka is well again, in splendid keeping. He is a darling. Found Mamma entertaining Mr. Catlin, established for the day. Rather dull.

After dinner My Brother and Mr. Catlin went out to the river, first to see about the work on the levees and then to take tea at Mrs. Savage's. Later in the evening Anna and Brother Coley went out. My Brother's last day at home for many, many months, we fear.

Nov. 10: It was late when My Brother and Brother Coley got back last night after a pleasant visit. Neither of them admire Rose Norris, Mrs. Savage's niece, who has come to live with her. They represent her as "fat, cross, affected, high tempered, stubborn, and ugly," a harsh judgment and long list of faults for one short evening spent together. I hope our impressions will be more pleasant than Brother Coley's and more favorable than My Brother's.

My Brother left us today to join his regiment at Evansport on Occoquan Creek in Virginia. His health is quite restored but Oh! how we hate to give him up. His visit home has been such a delight to us. When will he come to gladden our hearts again? Mamma went with him as far as Vicksburg. He will not get off until Tuesday and so she will be with him longer. She will then pay Aunt Sarah the long promised visit. I hope she will enjoy her stay and that the change of air will benefit her health. She has been unwell so much of the year. They got off about twelve and we spent a lonely afternoon. The light of home leaves with Mamma.

Ashburn had quite a hard chill and still has fever.

Nov. 11: Ashburn was quite ill all day and all last night. He has had four chills since yesterday morning, one today at twelve and 2 o'clock. We were up with him last night and at daybreak I sent down for Mr. McRae and Dr. Lily. Dr. Lily has been here all day and will remain tonight. I am so uneasy about Ashburn and glad Dr. Lily will be here all night. If he is not much better in the morning, will send for Mamma.

The barrel of flour arrived very opportunely this evening. Was beginning to be afraid we would have to do without "flour fixings." We had already borrowed from Mrs. Curry and Mrs. McRae.

Nov. 27: How can I write the record of the last two weeks? It seems that the trouble and grief of years has been pressed into that short space of time. Ashburn, our darling, has gone, never to return. Oh! how we miss him every hour in the day. The noble, gentle heart and the loving sensitive nature are stilled forever, passed from the world as though they had never been. What great thoughts, loving wishes, and proud hopes lie buried in his grave. So young, so bouyant, so full of life and happiness, brilliant with the very joy of living such a little while ago, and now dead—dead to it all. . . .

Nov. 28: Ashburn died on Tuesday, November 12, at 11 o'clock at night of swamp fever. We sent for Mamma very early Tuesday morning, but she could not get here until

Wednesday morning too late. She was so dreadfully distressed. As soon as he died, Brother Coley started at once to Vicksburg to meet Mamma and to make arrangements for the burial. He reached DeSoto just as she crossed the ferry, and as soon as she saw him she knew the worst. Brother Walter had gone for her and brought her back. She so reproached herself for leaving him when he was sick, but we told her everybody on the place had been sick off and on all summer and she could not know this would be a serious illness. She loved him so. We always told her that she loved and indulged him more than any of us, and she always said, why, he was the best boy of them all and never gave any occasion to be scolded.

Nov. 29: Mr. Reading is out tonight to say good-bye as his furlough is out, and he is off for the tented field. He is in high spirits and evidently prefers this wild reckless life to the humdrum life of the family man.

Joe Carson came out while we were planting some flowers, sent us by Mrs. Savage, in the new garden. He came on business and stayed only a short time. Brother Coley and Walter went out with him to see the ram *Manassas*⁵⁴ which has run aground just below Mr. Newman's. She is on her way up to help the gunboats at Columbus.

It was a hard fought battle and a glorious victory for us at Belmont.⁵⁵

The boys are just back and I hear them in the dining room eating supper. They saw only the outside of the *Manassas*. It has been there two days and several boats are trying to pull her off the bar.

We have not heard from My Brother since he left two weeks ago. His regiment is now at Leesburg, Va.

We are looking for the teacher every day. He was to leave Virginia on the fourteenth and should have been here some

⁵⁴ The *Manassas* was part of the Confederate fleet which drove the Federal gunboats from the mouth of the Mississippi October 11-12, 1861.—H. Allen Gosnell, *Guns on the Western Waters* (Baton Rouge, 1949), 35-43.

⁵⁵ Belmont, Mo., November 7, 1861.

days ago. The boys are very impatient over the delay. They realize the importance of this year's study.

Dr. Buckner writes that they will be up next Saturday. They stayed from Wednesday until Friday when they came up to Ashburn's funeral. He was buried Thursday in a clump of woods just back of the house, the new family graveyard. Our Father and two little sisters were removed there from the old graveyard a year ago.

Here at home all seems strangely dull and sad. I know Ashburn's death is a bitter blow to Other Pa, the child of his old age, his Benjamin.

A warm lovely week, a wanderer from the April sisterhood. No frost and the flowers are still in fullest bloom—roses and annuals, as gay as in May. "The Melancholy days have come" for our household but not for Dame Nature. The boys have been out hunting most of the day with poor success—one duck—but the woods are full of game and the lakes covered with ducks.

Brother Coley and Mr. Reading went to attend the drill at Willow Bayou and to bid adieu to Mr. Reading's friends. They went from there to Omega. No mail. But Brother Coley brought back the paper containing the resolutions of sympathy passed by the Willow Bayou company on Ashburn's death. How he loved all military matters.

Mamma was talking tonight of her early days. She was married before she was sixteen, before she had left school, but she had been out enough to reject ten lovers before she met papa. All of them are living still. She was and is a beautiful woman of most attractive manner and a brilliant conversationalist with a great power of attracting love, the first and greatest gift that can be bestowed on anyone. She has the most cheerful, brightest spirit and is a brave resourceful woman. None of the children bear a strong resemblance to either her or our Father. Brother Walter is most like her.

Nov. 30: Our first cold, bright day of fall at last. Mr. Wilkinson, the teacher, at last arrived this morning, and Dr. Buckner, Aunt Laura, and dear little Beverly arrived this evening. Really the first visit they have ever paid us here.

Beverly is certainly as charming a little fairy as ever danced over the greensward.

This is the last day of a month that brought us unmixed joy and hopeless sorrow. My Brother was with us at its commencement and now at the close he is in camp again, and one of our dearest and best has bidden farewell to Earth and floated out on the dark river.

Several battles during the month—Leesburg and Belmont, victories for us, and Port Royal where we suffered defeat.⁵⁶

A letter from Brother to Mamma, our first news. He had just arrived at Leesburg and would start in an hour with his company on picket duty and would perhaps be out several weeks. Had not seen Uncle Bo as the Southernns were already doing picket duty. The boys were off hunting until after dark and brought back a large buck, Brother Coley's spoils of the chase. Beverly, with tears streaming down her dear little face at the sight, exclaimed, "Oh! poor deer, I so sorry for him, poor deer. O! Aunt Manda, please have a piece of him for my bekfus."

Mr. Wilkinson is quite a young man, graduated in June at Columbia College, D. C. Very tall and ungainly, topped by a high stovepipe hat and riding on a little mule with short stirrups, he was a figure of fun when he rode up. He betrays a weakness for jewelry and fancy vests and has decidedly a verdant look. He is exceedingly polite, rises and remains standing when a lady enters or leaves a room, a Virginia custom I hear. Spent most of the morning writing to Kate, My Brother, Cousin Jenny, and Miss Blankenship.

Dec. 2: School opened today, Mr. Wilkinson's first attempt. A biting north wind, but as yet no frost to kill the flowers. All the annuals and roses in full bloom. Mrs. Carson came out this morning to call on Aunt Laura and brought a lot of greenhouse cuttings for us. Dr. Buckner rode out, missed the boat, and so returned. Beverly is a darling little sunbeam.

⁵⁶ In mentioning Leesburg, the writer is referring to engagements in late October near the town at Ball's Bluff and Edward's Ferry. Port Royal, off the South Carolina coast, was seized by the Federal Navy.

Preaching at Willow Bayou Sunday, but none of us went. Not a profitably spent Sabbath.

Dec. 7: Dr. Buckner rode down on horseback to Vicksburg last Wednesday. Tuesday Mrs. Curry and three of her girls spent the day. She looks dreadful and lay down most of the time. I really like Mrs. Curry. She is kindhearted, but she certainly is funny. She is so different from other people that one never knows what she is going to do or say. She says Mr. Holbury and family are really in need of the necessities of life. They must have suffered but for the kindness of Mrs. Carson and Mrs. Curry. We have been culpably careless, so taken up with our own grief that we have not thought of the woes of others. We will try to do better.

Brother Coley and I rode out to Mr. Holbury's late Wednesday afternoon to take him \$20. He was kind in coming out when we were in trouble. No one was at home, and so we sealed the money in an envelope and gave it to the old Negro who came to take our horses. I rode Longfellow, one of the carriage horses, as Dr. Buckner had ridden Wonka to Vicksburg, Wonka's first long trip since Uncle Bo rode him down there in May when he left for the army.

Thursday Mrs. Hardison came, stopping our afternoon ride. Sister is just up this morning from a three-day spell of fever.

Dr. Devine came out Friday. While we were at dinner Mrs. Savage and Anna came in, Anna to remain two or three days. Dr. Lily dropped in during the afternoon and went out duck hunting with the boys. They brought in three ducks and he spent the evening. He is prone to flattery and "sweet nothings." Mamma and Aunt Laura retired rather early but we were up until twelve. Anna put Brother Coley's hair up in curl papers, and this morning he roused her at sunup to come out and take it down for him. After breakfast he allowed Anna to cut it for him and a funny job she made of it. He had to leave before she finished to go hunting with the boys and Mr. Wilkinson. Anna is not a born barber. Robert came for Anna, and as the weather was very threaten-

ing, they took lunch and left early. Mamma was busy sewing on underclothes.

The hunters returned at four, just in time to miss the rain, with a fine deer killed by Brother Walter. Mamma had Webster to mount a mule at once and carry a quarter to Mrs. Carson and one to Mrs. Savage.

We spent the evening eating sugar cane sent out by the Carson boys and teaching Mr. Wilkinson backgammon, or rather, trying.

Beverly is certainly enjoying the country and the sugar cane. Her maid Clara is so good to her.

Mr. Wilkinson has tried teaching this one week and is utterly incapable of teaching any but the two youngest children. Mamma has had an explanation with him, and he will stay here until he gets other employment, or if he fails in that Mamma has asked him to stay until spring. Mamma wrote at once for another teacher and Mr. Wilkinson will do the best he can for the boys until the other teacher arrives. He is wonderfully ignorant to have graduated anywhere. When Mamma spoke to him, he confessed that he could not teach the boys. He said he thought he was coming to an out-of-the-way, illiterate place and would have no trouble teaching anybody he might be thrown with. But he said he realized the first day that he had made a mistake, that Brother Coley was already far in advance of him, that the other boys knew as much as he did, and that he did not know what to do. He thanked Mamma very heartily for her kindness as he had no money to return. His home will be here until Mamma can find a place for him to teach little children. There may be an opening near here. For several days he was very sad, but now that there has been an explanation, he has brightened up and is quite cheerful. He has the most grotesque way of nodding his head up and down, up and down, all the time he is talking, or eating, or even reading. Does it unconsciously and looks like a toy Mandarin.

Made some candy for Beverly and all enjoyed it more than the wee lady.

Dec. 22: I have been sleeping with Mamma and so I have

not written for some time, as night is my time for scribbling. Aunt Laura left us ten days ago after a two-week stay, and she seemed to enjoy so much being with us all, especially Mamma. Her visit was a pleasure to us. She took the boat in the evening. Brother Coley went down with her and returned next day on the same packet to find Joe and Robert here just back from a big hunt. Most of the hunters in the country were out and not a deer brought in. Huldah and Mary also spent the night. After two weeks of the loveliest warm spring weather with skies as blue and bright as bend over Italian plains, we wake to hear a soft, warm rain pattering down, and so no church for us today. And none of us went last Sunday. Sunday spent at home is a long, weary day. Joe Carson came back from Mrs. Savage's with Brother Coley Friday night, and they were off before day on a hunt, getting in at sundown with a fawn killed by Mr. Wilkinson, who was so delighted and excited that he actually had fever when he returned. But thinking of the matter, fatigue must have had something to do with it, as he is utterly unused to hunting and horseback riding, and they had been out all day.

Other Pa came Friday night. He looks better than we expected but seems older. It may be because he has turned out his whiskers, which are perfectly white.

The greatest news of all—Uncle Johnny is married. On the seventeenth of this month he gave his heart and hand to Miss Kate Boone, a girl from Charleston, S. C., who has been visiting her brother at Pine Bluff, Ark., for some months. She is quite a young girl, not more than seventeen, while Uncle Johnny is thirty-five. We wish them every happiness and I wish he would bring her down to see us. I only hope he will not try to educate her according to his theories but will let her go on as Nature and her own antecedents and education would have her. But for years he has had the idea of marrying a very young girl and moulding and educating her according to his pet theories. My mind misgives me that such is still his plan. Other Pa left the day after the wedding, which was very quiet. He is not pleased with the marriage, though he does not say much against it. Uncle John is

editing a paper in Pine Bluff. He is a most impracticable man with so many theories, and he has made ducks and drakes of all the money inherited from Other Ma [Grandmother Ragan] and every other cent he could get. We hope marriage will be his salvation, an anchor to keep him from drifting with every tide, or feeling, or impulse. Johnny says he shall call his new Aunt "Aunt Boone." He likes it better than "Kate." I have pre-emption title on that name.

Hurrah! Mr. Wilkinson has secured a situation at Mr. Matt Johnson's at a salary of \$100 per month to teach Mrs. M. Johnson's little brothers. I think they live at Wilton near Goodrich. Certainly it seems "a fool for luck" is verified in his case. He is so silly and so green, altogether hateful. Can only interest him by talking about girls. He pretends to be desperate about Anna Dobbs and has seen her only twice. He asked Brother Coley did not the teachers down here always marry rich girls? That was enough for the boys and Robert and Joe. They have been telling many marvelous tales of the great wealth of the girls, how especially susceptible they are to teachers from a distance and so admire their manners and style, and running many "rigs" ⁵⁷ on him. He has not sense to see it. He will leave us a few days after Christmas.

Uncle Hoccles came today to get a pass to go over and see his children in Mississippi.⁵⁸ Last Christmas when Mamma gave him the pass, we all said it would be for the last time. He is so old, but he looks stronger and better now than then.

There will be no merrymaking for us this Christmastide. Aunt Laura when here promised to send her piano to us to keep as long as I wished, until we buy one. We were so pleased at the offer and now she writes to say it will be

⁵⁷ Playing jokes.

⁵⁸ The pass was necessary to prevent his being taken as a runaway. The Black Code, promulgated by Bienville in 1724 and later revised, provided that a slave caught on horseback without written permission should be arrested, given twenty-five lashes, and sent back to his master, who would be charged twelve and one-half cents per mile for his return.—Frederick W. Williamson, *Northeast Louisiana, A Narrative History of the Ouachita River Valley and the Concordia Country* (Monroe, La., 1939), 138-39.

shipped on Tuesday's boat. It is so kind of her and what a resource it will be to me, though I have forgotten about all my music.

Sister went home with Aunt Laura. She is very well and enjoying the visit.

Mrs. Virginia Cavalier, the oldest sister of the Morris girls, died a week ago of swamp fever. She was a widow with two young children and a very attractive woman. Her brother-in-law, Mr. Joe Cavalier, has been addressing her for the last year, so report says.

1862

"These troublous times"

Jan. 6: Christmas passed very quietly with us. Greetings on all sides but no gifts and not many good things prepared beforehand. Had the customary eggnog before breakfast, but not a prize nog. It was made of borrowed whiskey with a strong flavor of turpentine. A lovely day, so warm that we sat on the gallery until bedtime.

Julia Reed came on the twenty-seventh and stayed until today. This is the first Christmas in our recollection that was not a time of fun and feasting.

We missed Ashburn's kiss and blithesome presence. Mamma invited the two Mr. Valentines, father and son, to dinner, thinking it would be pleasant for Other Pa to meet the older man, and rather to our surprise they came and stayed until sundown. We never heard of Mr. Valentine, Sr., paying a social visit before. He is odd, just as we fancied he would be, but an excellent talker. He and his son are strikingly alike in looks, manners, and turn of mind, though they generally take opposite sides on every proposition. Mark, Jr., says they are forced to do so to have something to talk about the long winter evenings. Mark, Jr., acquainted us with his fixed determination to pay us a New Year's call. So Julia and I hurried back from our ride that misty, misty morning and looked for him all day. In the afternoon we begged Mamma to let us pay our expected visit to Mrs. Savage, but she would not allow it. So he ruined our plans for all day. It will be long before we let an engagement with him keep us in again.

The morning after Christmas Mamma gave all the house servants holiday—we would have cold dinner—and they all went down to the quarters. She hired some of the field women,

who were busy in the backyard drying out lard, making up sausages, cleaning feet and so on. The boys had gone hunting and Othello Pa, Mamma, and I had seated ourselves for a day of quiet reading when Mr. McRae came in and asked, did we know that we were to have a large company to dinner? It was even so and in ten minutes everything was changed. Everybody was in a stir, the servants sent for, dressing, making fires, preparing for dinner, and just as everything was ready and we were sitting comfortably in the parlor, the company arrived—Mr. Catlin, Robert, Anna Dobbs, Emily Norris, and Miss Bettie Carter. There were to have been several more but something intervened. The engagement had been made a week before but they forgot to notify us. The day passed pleasantly enough, but just after the ladies left it rained and stormed with a cold wind and they were in all of it. But since it was a closed carriage, I reckon they kept dry.

Robert stayed all night and Joe came out to an early breakfast, and they all went hunting, returning with a deer, killed by Brother Coley, just in time for a 4 o'clock dinner and to meet Julia. At eleven Robert and Joe went home. Brother Coley went with them for a grand hunt on the river. They killed three deer, Robert one, his first, and Brother Coley another. Our boys had an engagement to spend Friday evening at Mrs. Savage's, an invitation with several other gentlemen, but they entirely forgot it, Robert remembering only when he got home and Mrs. Savage commenced scolding him. But he made his peace with the fine saddle of venison he carried home. Boys are funny fellows, but they were so busy here that night teasing Julia, making candy and eggnog, and enjoying themselves generally that they forgot everything else.

Mr. Catlin makes some startling speeches. He is coarse. His remarks on the Morgan and Bell question were startling to say the least. He has been devoting himself to Miss Bettie Carter. Quite a flirtation going on. But Robert tells us it is stopped since Dr. Lily was so meddlesome as to tell Mr. Catlin that Miss Bettie was looking for him to address her and would say yes. He crayfished right away. Why did Dr.

Lily want to spoil sport? He is not kin to them. How self-centered of Mr. Catlin to imagine a lady in love with him.

Saturday Julia, Jimmy, Johnny, Brother Walter, and I went to ride. Met Mr. Kaiser on his way to call on us and he joined the party. We rode as far as Dr. Meux's and got home just as the twilight was deepening into night. Brother Walter worried Julia all the way, got hold of her reins and held the horse for a mile. Of course Julia felt like pinching him well, if she could have reached him. We had a splendid eggnog after supper that Mr. Kaiser praised as only foreigners can.

Sunday all but Johnny went to church. He said his coat was not quite good enough. Quite a cavalcade, seven horsemen and the carriage full, more than a third of the congregation. Mr. Clinton preached a good sermon, but I did not hear it as I became so ill while riding down that I got out at Mrs. W. Scott's and lay down until they returned from church. It was my first visit to Mrs. Scott's—not very ceremonious. By night I was all right.

The piano came during the week and Julia, Other Pa, and I put it in the best order, and on New Year's evening the house echoed for the first time to the sound of the piano.

Mr. Wilkinson has gone to his new duties. Mamma sent him out with a boy to bring the horse back. When he told Mamma good-bye, he said, "Farewell, Mrs. Stone, I thank you for your horse and your 'horsepitality.'" And that is now a byword in the family.

Jan. 8: This is my twenty-first birthday, and I think this will be my motto for the year—so uncertain are all our surroundings—"Live for today. Tomorrow's night, tomorrow's cares shall bring to light." May I always be able to put my trust in God as I can tonight, satisfied that He will order our future as is best. This has been a year of changes, of stirring and eventful life, the shortest ever in our calendar. God has been with our Nation during this year of trouble. He has given us wise rulers, brave and successful generals, valiant and patriotic men, and a united people, self-sacrificing and with their trust in God.

Johnny and Jimmy started to school to Mr. Hazelitt, who is teaching at Mr. Curry's schoolhouse. Brother Walter has gone out to Bayou Macon¹ to buy and drive home a drove of beeves. Brother Coley will start to school as soon as he is well enough.

We are sewing and knitting. Mamma and I put on mourning. We gave most of our colored things to Mrs. Holbury, who was glad to get them, and so we have a lot of sewing to do. I have been dressing Sister's dolls to have them in nice order when she gets back. We miss her greatly. Other Pa went to Vicksburg Sunday. He is much troubled settling up Ashburn's estate and is so sad and despondent. Cousin Titia and Cousin Jenny have been telegraphed for, and when they come to Vicksburg Mamma will go down to meet them. A family meeting.

Robert and Ben Clarkson spent the day Thursday. Julia, Brother Coley, and I were just starting to Mrs. Carson's when she drove up to pay a call, her second this week. On leaving she insisted on our going with her. We dismissed our carriage and drove out with her to spend the day and the night with Anna Dobbs. Mrs. Savage is out on Bayou Macon. Mr. Kaiser and I made an eggnog for them while they all played stupid games. We had a most pleasant conversation seated by the inglenook.

The next morning Mrs. Carson called by, and she and Julia went down to call on Mrs. Newman and Miss Bettie Carter. I stayed with Anna and Rose Norris, our first acquaintance with her. On Mrs. Carson's return I went with her to take dinner. Met there Mrs. Bernard and Mrs. Scott from Lake Providence. The air was sweet with the perfume of white hyacinths and sweet olive. Rode home in the late evening attended by Joe and Jimmy Carson. They came out for a hunt and remained until Sunday. Had a charming canter home notwithstanding rough roads and a misty rain. Two

¹ Bayou Macon (pronounced Mason) heads above the Arkansas-Louisiana line a few miles inland from the Mississippi, runs roughly parallel to that river, and empties into the Tensas River west of St. Joseph, La.

letters from My Brother and one from dear Kate thanking me for the pretty black and gold Zouave jacket.

Jan. 16: Real winter weather at last with sleet and snow whitening the ground—a real winter landscape. We made some ice cream last night, ate it this morning, and pronounced it splendid. Today they are killing the last of the hogs, and all of the house servants with a contingent from the quarters are making lard, sausage, souse, etc., etc.

Mamma and I went to Vicksburg in the carriage Friday and Sister and I returned Sunday, leaving Mamma there. I went rather against Mamma's wishes and I never remember so disagreeable a visit. Mr. Miller was at home and was intensely trying. Everything else was at sixes and sevens. Everything went wrong, and I am glad to be at home again. Sister is also charmed to get back. Mr. Miller is at home on furlough and I never saw him more hateful. Aunt Sarah looks worried to death. Dr. Buckner and Aunt Laura are both out of sorts and Other Pa is very much depressed. And there is such noise and confusion among the children. The situation was insupportable.

Cousin Jenny and Titia are to be down this week. Letters from both soldiers. They are in winter quarters and My Brother is on detached duty superintending the laying off and erection of fortifications around Leesburg. He has been ordered to report to Maj. Boyle at Manassas, but Col. Humphreys does not wish to give him up. He prefers remaining at Leesburg. He said they had a grand eggnog Christmas, their only festivities. Capt. Tom Manlove arrived in Vicksburg the morning we left. He brought our letters. He came to get recruits. So sorry not to see him. We waited three hours on the ferry at DeSoto, the river too rough to cross.

Mrs. Savage, Anna, and Rose spent yesterday with us. It was a miserably cold day but we spent it agreeably. I was still busy in the evening finishing off Sister's doll clothes. As soon as the weather moderates, Sister will start to school with the boys. Beverly gave her a pretty little pair of earrings.

Jan. 17: The snow is melting and running off the house in a continual rain and underfoot is too slushy for anything. It is too cold and wet for Sister to go to school, but the boys went and came in this evening covered with mud but in high good humor. Each one has an essay to write, their first attempt, and it seems to hang over them as a regular kill-joy. Brother Coley is studying at home for several hours a day. I have been sewing and reading *The Pilgrims of the Rhine*,² a perfect prose poem. Warren sent up four partridges to-night. They were such sensible, happy looking little birds that I could not bear to have them killed and so turned them loose in the garden. He traps quite a number.

Jan. 20: We looked for Mamma today. I had Frank busy all day putting the house in real company trim, but Brother Coley returned from Omega without her. I suppose the estate business is not yet settled. The boys were out Saturday until nearly dark on their customary hunt. How Curry came home and spent the night with them. And what an appetite that little boy has. His affinity for souse is great. I know he had wild dreams.

Sunday, though it was cloudy, windy, and so muddy, all of us went to church, leaving only Brother Walter at home. Mr. Holbury gave us an excellent sermon. We saw nearly everyone we know in that section and also met the new Presbyterian minister, Mr. McNeely, and Anna's bright, particular star, Dr. Meagher from Franklin Parish. It looks like there might be serious intentions in that quarter, for Mrs. Savage permits no flirting on her premises and is a famous matchmaker. The Doctor is quite nice looking. Anna was to go out to Thekla's today accompanied by "Brer Lil" and Dr. Meagher.

Dr. Lily left last week, I suppose for the army, and did not come out to say farewell. And such a friend as he claimed to be to the Brokenburn household! I was sorry he left in a bad humor with us.

Mr. and Mrs. Goodrich were at church, his first attendance

² A novel by Edward George Bulwer-Lytton (1803-73).

for years. The death of their little girl Sarah not long since was a dreadful blow to them. She was a bright, attractive child about thirteen who died of diphtheria. They have one little boy.

Mr. Wilkinson was on hand and was as ungainly and awkwardly polite as usual. Brother Coley is reading and studying. I sent to Mrs. Hardison for something to read and she could find only *Mabel Vaughn*³ and *The Belle of Washington*.⁴ The first I had read and the other was not worth reading, and so I am stranded on reading. No papers, or letters, or war news since we heard of the small battle between Col. McIntosh and Opothle Yohola, the Indian chief.⁵

Jan. 22: Have been all alone today as Brother Coley made a hasty and unlooked-for trip to Vicksburg.

Gen. [Leonidas] Polk has called on the planters from Memphis to the lower part of Carroll Parish for hands to complete the fortifications at Fort Pillow, forty miles above Memphis. A great many Negroes have been sent from Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Mississippi, and now it comes Louisiana's time to shoulder her part of the common burden. A man was here today with Gen. Polk's appeal. He had been riding constantly since Monday from one plantation to another, and nearly everyone had promised to send, some half of their force of men, some more, some less. As they get off tomorrow evening, Brother Coley had to go down to see Mamma about it.

Took a cosy dinner all to myself shut up in Mamma's room, which I am occupying while she is away and which Frank keeps at summer heat. I find the piano a great resource as I am recalling some of my music.

It is rumored that Gen. Humphrey Marshall with a force

³ A novel by M. S. Cummins.

⁴ *The Belle of Washington; A True Story of the Affections* (1860), by Mrs. N. P. Lasselle.

⁵ This reference is to an encounter in Indian Territory between a faction of pro-Confederate Creeks, led by Colonel D. N. McIntosh, and a pro-Union faction, headed by Opothle Yohola.—Grant Foreman, *A History of Oklahoma* (Norman, 1942), 102-109.

of 2,500 men was surprised by a large Yankee force and cut to pieces.⁶

We miss Mamma dreadfully. The boys start to school immediately after breakfast and get home just at sunset, and directly after supper they commence on next day's lessons. Brother Walter has just worried through his first essay. It is short and of course must be filled with mistakes, but he will not let us look at it. It is the first step that costs. Hereafter, hope he will not find it such a job. The other two boys are hammering away at their speeches. Sister has not attained to the dignity of either writing or speaking yet awhile.

Jan. 24: Mamma and Other Pa got home late Thursday evening. We were not looking for them and no supper had been kept hot, as it was some time before then that hot supper was served. Other Pa only came on business and went back to Vicksburg carrying with him Ashburn's Negroes, who are to be divided out among the heirs. Separating the old family Negroes who have lived and worked together for so many years is a great grief to them and a distress to us. I wish Mamma had been able to buy them all in and keep them here.

Jan. 27: We went to hear Mr. McNeely preach Sunday—rather dry and humdrum. Dr. Carson took him all around the country to introduce him to his new field of work. Quite pleasant socially, and could not be called ceremonious.

But I forget. I must give the real neighborhood news. Rose and Dr. Lily are to be married very soon—my pet prejudice, Rose Norris and the "Tiger Lily." She will be Mrs. "Rose Lily." She slipped quietly off with Mrs. Savage to New Orleans and is selecting her trousseau, and he has gone to visit his people in Baton Rouge and will join her in the City. I never would have picked Rose Norris out of all the world to spend my life with. For that matter, neither would I have selected Dr. Lily for that post. But oh! how tastes differ. I cannot believe he is in love with her. It has been too recently that he was criticizing her severely—her

⁶ Middle Creek and Prestonburg, Ky., January 10, 1862.

looks, her walk, her manner. If it proves a happy marriage, I shall be surprised. She is quite young, about seventeen I think. There is already a gathering of the clan of Norris at Mrs. Savage's, and a busy people will they be getting the sewing done within a month.

Jan. 30: It certainly is a most difficult matter to get a teacher. Mamma was expecting a Mr. Stockton and now tonight comes a letter showing that he will not do at all. His terms are entirely too high. He writes like a perfect Yankee. As he has failed us, I have been busy all the evening writing letters for Mamma to other applicants and an advertisement for the *Whig*. I expect the most from our application to Mr. Massie. We will see soon, I hope, the successful aspirant.

We were also writing letters for Tom Manlove to carry to Uncle Bo and My Brother. Also, a short note to Julia. I want to hear her remarks on the approaching marriage.

A late mail this evening. A letter from My Brother complains that it is dreadfully dull. They are just wearing the time away winterbound in their tents. The papers confirm our defeat at Fishing Creek and the death of Gen. Zollicoffer.⁷ Two lamentable events. Mr. McNeely knew Gen. Zollicoffer intimately and grieves for his death. He admired him greatly and considers his death a great loss to the Southern Cause. The whole Northern Army is now on the move preparing to attack us at all points. We expect to hear of great battles within the next few days. God grant us victory in our just war. The manner in which the North is moving her forces, now that she thinks us surrounded and can give us the annihilating blow, reminds me of a party of hunters crouched around the covert of the deer, and when the lines are drawn and there is no escape, they close in and kill.

⁷ Fishing Creek (Mills Springs and Logans Cross Roads), Ky., January 19-20, 1862. Felix Kirk Zollicoffer died from wounds received in this battle. By mistake he rode into Federal lines and met troops commanded by Colonel Speed S. Fry, who recognized him. One of Zollicoffer's staff fired, and the Federals answered with a volley which killed Zollicoffer and two of his staff officers. Another account states that he was shot by Colonel Fry in a hand-to-hand encounter.—*Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949* (Washington, 1950); *Dictionary of American Biography*, XX, 660.

From Ashburn's estate Mamma drew two Negroes, Ma-thilda and Abe. Patsy and John went to Cousins Jenny and Titia. They all came up on the boat this afternoon. Mat with Festus, the horse, goes to Uncle Johnny, Hill to Uncle Bo, Peggy and Jane to Aunt Laura, and Sydney and her two youngest children to Aunt Sarah. It is hard for Sydney and her older children to be separated. We are so sorry but cannot help it.

We spent a day this week with Mrs. Graves. Mrs. Hardison went with us. It was our first long visit there and was so tiresome. Theresa was away. Sister came from school with a raging toothache and cried all night and in the morning Mr. Hardison came down and begged her to let him pull it. She would not be persuaded and the fight must have cured her, as she has not complained since.

Cousin Jenny writes that she and Cousin Titia will be up in about a month. It has been so long since I have seen them. Mamma says they are looking so well and pretty.

It looks like we may have difficulty in getting summer clothes. The merchants are selling only for cash and that cash is hard to get, unless we can do as they seem to be doing in the towns—make it. Judging from the looks of the paper money and the many signatures on odd-looking paper and pasteboard, one would be convinced that many people are making their own money.⁸ We have spent less this year than ever before. Have bought only absolute necessities—no frills and furbelows for us. Affairs are too grave to think of dress.

Feb. 1: "It is raining and it is hailing, and it is cold stormy weather." The worst winter weather. Commenced reading *Redgauntlet*⁹ last evening and followed his fortunes through the gloomy morning. I saw him safely through his troubles and happily settled by 4 o'clock this afternoon. Practiced on the piano ever since until bedtime. I have commenced a set of linen aprons for Beverly. Will embroider

⁸ Beginning in March, 1861, the Confederate Government issued great quantities of paper notes which soon depreciated in value. By 1864 a gold dollar was worth thirty paper ones

⁹ A novel by Sir Walter Scott, published 1824.

them all, some in white and two or three in blue and red. I intend to make them pretty and dainty to suit the dear little wearer. Mamma's trunk came today and so we will have plenty of sewing for some time.

Have nothing new to read. Thus I have taken up my old favorite, Scott, the Prince of Novelists. Who of the modern writers can compare with him?

Another death among the Negroes today—Jane Eyre, Malona's baby. The little creature was lying in its mother's lap laughing and playing when it suddenly threw itself back, straightened out, and was dead. It is impossible to know what was the matter as it seemed perfectly well a minute before it died. This is the third child the mother has lost since Mamma bought her, and she seems devotedly attached to her babies. This is her last child.

The boys have been out in the rain most of the day rabbit hunting. Brother Coley is much disturbed over an eruption that has been worrying him for two weeks now. Brother Walter seems to be taking it. They will go out to see the doctor the first sunny day.

We all accuse Johnny of growing misanthropic since mixing with his fellowmen. Going to school with so many seems to induce most sour and cynical ideas. Little Sister wearies of the tedium of home after three weeks of school and wants to go with the boys, but Mamma thinks it too cold and wet for her to venture out. So she must needs bide at home and play dolls.

No war news or any other kind. Oh, this inactive life when there is such stir and excitement in the busy world outside. It is enough to run one wild. Oh! to be in the heat and turmoil of it all, to live, to live, not stagnate here.

How can a man rest quietly at home when battles are being fought and fields lost and won every day? I would eat my heart away were I a man *at home* these troublous times.

Feb. 4: Sister has been suffering for several days with neuralgia and it is but little sleep either she or Mamma has had. No news from the wedding. Only the family were to be present. Brother Coley has started to school with the others

and is trying Dr. Devine's prescription. Brother Walter is home with a chill. Going out in the cold and wet was too much for him. Mamma had several of the women from the quarter sewing. Nothing to be done in the fields—too muddy. They put in and finished quilting a comfort made of two of my cashmere dresses. Mamma had Aunt Laura's silk one put in today and Sue is quilting on it. I am so afraid Mamma will commence work on it herself, and if she does I shall feel in duty bound to put up my linen embroidery and help her. And I simply detest making and quilting quilts. Precious little of it have I ever done. This will be a lovely silk affair. Aunt Laura always has so many pretty silks and wears them such a little while that they are never soiled. After quilting, one rises from the chair with such a backache, headache, and bleeding pricked fingers.

No church. Such a wild Sunday. So I commenced reading Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*.¹⁰ Like it better than any religious book I have read. Mr. Curry is at home again. Reports Mrs. Curry much better. A note from Julia exclaiming over the union of the Lily and the Rose.

Feb. 5: Mamma is busy on the silk quilt destined for Sister. Both Walter and Sister are better. The others are at school. Worked myself half blind on Beverly's aprons tonight. Have been intending to take up French again, but studying is too humdrum work for these times. The boys say there is a runaway about the country. That makes one feel creepy when alone at night. So out with the light and to sleep to dream.

Feb. 6: A long letter from Uncle Bo, who writes as he talks, gay and rollicking. He is still on picket duty and in high spirits.

Our papers have dropped off one by one. The only one to come now is the *Picayune*. We will subscribe for others. News of the partial loss of the Burnside expedition off Cape Hatteras in a heavy storm.¹¹

¹⁰ By Jeremy Taylor (1613-67), published in 1650-51.

¹¹ General Ambrose E. Burnside left Fort Monroe, Va., January 11,

Feb. 16: Last week the weather was fine and the roads improved, and so we went out in the carriage to Mrs. Savage's, stopping by for Mrs. Carson, who had been ill for two weeks and could not go. We found all at Mrs. Savage's in the hurry and bustle of wedding arrangements—all working on white linen. Mrs. Savage is charmed at the match and is just in her element preparing for a wedding. She has bought two new carpets and a pretty ashes of rose silk for Anna. She had it made in New Orleans and also two pretty summer dresses. Rose looks perfectly happy and content with the prettiest possible engagement ring flashing and sparkling on her finger—a big solitaire, the image of Aunt Sarah's.

I had no idea Rose's face could wear such a joyous look, but even joy and youth cannot make her pretty. Anna Dobbs, Mr. and Mrs. Norris, and Rose's mother came in the evening from Bayou Macon by way of Richmond, the swamp being impassable. What a weary, bedraggled, tacky-looking set they were.

Rose's want of beauty is explained as soon as you see her mother, a regular witch of an old lady with the most apologetic, deprecating air. She has put up with many a snob, you can see, and has Bayou Macon written all over her. Now is not it mean of me to write in that way of that harmless old lady and I know absolutely nothing of her? She may be in her daily life an uncannonized saint.

The wedding is to be a real grand, old-fashioned merry-making. All the relatives on both sides for four generations are to assemble at Mrs. Savage's before the affair, and all friends for miles around are to be invited and a great feast prepared. And oh, the quantities of sewing to be done. Mrs. Savage says when there is a wedding she believes in straining a point. I want to see Miss Patience Lily who is to be one of the bridesmaids.

Mamma has at last secured a teacher, a German with a name I cannot yet spell. He comes with the highest testi-

1862, with a large expeditionary force bound for the North Carolina coast. Off Cape Hatteras a gale destroyed several of his ships. Eventually the force landed on February 4 and captured New Berne, N. C., on March 14.—*Battles and Leaders*, I, 660-69.

monials, is a graduate of a German university, and is very learned. He is the funniest man. He speaks the greatest jargon and with such odd expressions that we must laugh sometimes. I shall be surprised if he suits Mamma for any length of time—too peculiar and quick tempered.

The war news is very bad, only defeats—Roanoke Island, fall of Fort Henry, and the ascent of the Tennessee River and shelling of Florence, Ala. We still hold Fort Donelson, though it has been under fire for two days.¹²

A heavy snowstorm—the deepest snow we ever had. The children enjoy snowballing and we all enjoy the ice cream. There is not much milk left for butter after the boys get out of the dairy.

Feb. 20: Monday school started in My Brother's room and I go on with French under Mr. Stenckrath. He is to hear me after supper. I have been staying in Mamma's room lately. Now, she, Sister, and Frank are all sound asleep and I have just finished my French exercises. Mr. Stenckrath is a splendid teacher and likes his profession. He seems just the man for the boys. He seems to have a restless nature. From his confused account of himself, he has had a roving life, seldom staying more than a few months at a place, and so we need not expect to keep him long.

No mails for two weeks, the boat laid up for repairs.

The news for the last few days gathered from extras and dailies is bitterly disappointing: Forts Henry and Donelson given up, Bowling Green ¹³ evacuated and shelled and burned by the enemy, and the Northern hordes marching on Nashville. Four days ago the people were leaving and the town was being shelled by the gunboats. We do not care for those Kentucky towns; they deserve their fate. But Nashville, so true to the South, is a different matter. I know Dr. Elliott's school will suffer. He is such an ardent Southerner. I graduated there. An excellent school it is.¹⁴

¹² Roanoke Island, N. C., February 8; Fort Henry, Tenn., February 6; Fort Donelson (Dover), Tenn., February 14-16, 1862.

¹³ Bowling Green, Ky., February 15, 1862.

¹⁴ Nashville Female Academy.

It is a gloomy outlook just now but "behind the clouds the sun still shines" and victory will be ours at last.

Nothing from Cousin Titia and Jenny and we looked for them today. There is no communication with Vicksburg; it might be under blockade for what we hear.

Mamma has finished the silk quilt, octagons of blue and yellow satin from two of her old dresses. Sister claims it. Aunt Laura's, of purple and blue silk, is done and is exceedingly pretty. She has had several comforts made during the bad weather, and it has been so bad. I have about finished Beverly's second apron, blue and white scallops with a bunch of heartsease embroidered in front and cute little pockets, also embroidered.

Feb. 21: Mr. Stockton came this morning expecting to get the situation as teacher. He wrote three weeks ago accepting Mamma's offer but the letter has not yet arrived. Of course he is disappointed, but Mamma has told him to stay with us awhile. It is probable he can get a situation around here. He is a rather small, delicate-looking man with short, close yellow curls, blue eyes, ugly mouth and nose, and the cleanest-looking red and white face. He is an accomplished man with pleasant cultivated manner. Mr. Stenckrath triumphs over him as being first to get the situation and they have taken a grand disgust for each other.

A note of despair from Julia. Mrs. Reading with whom they board is moving to Vicksburg to live and Julia and her mother do not know where to go. Mamma sent them a note by Webster, who was going to take Mr. Stockton's horse back to Omega, asking them to come and make us a long visit.

Nashville has not yet fallen. Our army, 80,000 strong, is encamped around the city and the enemy is marching up, 250,000 of them, to battle.¹⁵ The general impression is that both Nashville and Memphis are doomed, and the Yankee gunboats will then descend the Mississippi and get all the cotton they can steal.

¹⁵ These figures, probably based on newspaper reports, are greatly exaggerated. The Confederate force at Nashville numbered about 17,000, the approaching Federal Army probably 40,000.

Brother Coley went to the last drill today at Willow Bayou. The company is broken up. There have been calls from the governors of all the river states for all the able-bodied men to come forward.¹⁶ Every man is speaking of joining the army, and we fear within a week Brother Coley will away.

In the present sad conditions of affairs traitors are springing up in every direction, as plentiful and busy as frogs in a marsh. I would not trust any man now who stays at home instead of going out to fight for his country.

I am tired. I have been so busy. Have read several hours—French and English—sewed, practiced, written a letter, entertained Mr. Stockton for a time, played nine games of cards, eaten three meals and a luncheon, learned and recited four French lessons, and written all this. Surely it is bedtime.

Feb. 22: We had a surprising piece of family news this morning. Either Cousin Jenny or Cousin Titia was married a week ago today. We do not know which. Mr. Stockton mentioned it incidentally in the course of conversation, and after our surprised queries, he told us all he knew. He said that one of the young ladies was married at Dr. Buckner's by Mr. Lord to a Tennessee soldier, name unknown, and started off next morning up the river. He did not know where. We are wild for particulars. Cannot tell why they have not let us know all about it.

Mr. Kaiser is off to the war and without bidding us good-bye. Mamma is trying to get a situation for Mr. Stockton and in the meanwhile is doctoring him up with all kinds of strong, hot medicines to make him well enough to accept a place should he get it. He has a horrid cold and the poor fellow is perfectly obedient to Mamma. He takes all her doses without a murmur. Mr. Neily wishes a teacher and Brother Coley went to see him this morning. He offers only

¹⁶ On February 22, 1862, General G. T. Beauregard, acting for General Albert Sidney Johnston, commander of the Department of Kentucky and Tennessee, addressed circulars to the governors of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee urging them each to send 5,000 to 10,000 men to Columbus, Ky., for defense of the Mississippi River above Memphis.—*Battles and Leaders*, I, 574.

\$500. It is for his grandchildren. Mamma wrote also to Mrs. Savage and Mr. Harris, but neither wish a teacher just now. Anna writes Mrs. Savage has given out the idea of a large wedding. Only the families are to be present. Mamma sent Rose a lovely pincushion. Mrs. McRae is still very ill. Mamma spent part of the night there. I played three-handed euchre with Mr. Stockton and Mr. Stenckrath until, as the boys say, I am "dead beat."

Feb. 24: News of a victory for us in Missouri in which Gen. Sigel, a German Yankee, was killed.¹⁷ All other tidings are gloomy but they have aroused the country with a trumpet call. There is the greatest excitement throughout the country. Almost everyone is going and going at once. Men are flocking to Johnston's standard by the thousands. They are not waiting to form companies, but are going to join those already in the field. Every man gets ready as soon as he can possibly do so, makes his way to the river, hails the first upward bound boat, and is off to join in the fight at Nashville. The whole country is awake and on the watch—think and talk only of war.

Robert came out this evening to consult with Brother Coley. He wants to go in the same company. But Brother Coley went to Vicksburg this morning to consult Dr. Buckner as to the best company for him to join. Robert is very low-spirited but determined on going. He says he knows he will never return. I like him very much and will be sorry to tell him good-bye. Mamma received a letter from Dr. Buckner today. He expects to leave with his company in two or three days and wrote for Brother Coley and Brother Walter. His is a cavalry company.

It was Cousin Titia who was married. We do not know to whom. They left for camp at Columbus, Miss.

Feb. 25: Our first mail for three weeks. Numbers of letters—a grieved one from Kate and an old one from My

¹⁷ This is possibly a reference to the Battle of Sugar Creek in southern Missouri, a small, indecisive engagement. General Franz Sigel was not killed as reported.

Brother. Cousin Titia married Mr. Charles Frazer, a lawyer of Memphis. They have been engaged for some time but it was an unexpected marriage. He got a furlough, came to Vicksburg, and insisted on being married, and so they were and went on to camp together at Columbus, Miss. Cousin Titia wrote to Mamma and tried to telegraph.¹⁸

March 1: February has been a month of defeats—Roanoke Island, Forts Henry and Donelson, and now proud old Nashville. All have fallen. A bitter month for us. A grand battle is looked for today or tomorrow at Columbus [Ky.].

Another soldier is leaving our fireside. Brother Coley has joined Dr. Buckner's cavalry company, and long before the month is over he will be on the field fighting to repel the invader. The first March winds find him safe in the haven of home. April will find him marching and counter-marching, weary and worn, and perhaps dead on the field of battle. He is full of life and hope, so interested in his company, and eager to be off. He says chains could not hold him at home. He has been riding ever since his return Wednesday trying to get the horses, subscriptions, and recruits for his company. Robert Norris goes with a sad foreboding heart to perform a dreaded duty. Brother Coley goes as a bridegroom to his wedding with high hopes and gay anticipations. Robert's is really the highest type of courage. He sees the danger but presses on. Brother Coley does not even think of it—just a glorious fight for fame and honor.

Wonder of wonders. Mr. Valentine is at last alive to the issue. He is much excited and interested and is getting up a subscription of corn for the families of men who are volun-

¹⁸ Letitia Austin and Colonel Charles Wesley Frazer, prominent lawyer and officer in the 5th Confed. Regt., became the parents of a daughter, Virginia, born on February 14, 1863, near Chattanooga, Tenn. Educated in private schools in Memphis, Virginia married Thomas R. Boyle, a Memphis attorney, and attained recognition as a writer of prose and poetry. Among books published by Virginia Frazer Boyle was *Brokenburne, A Southern Auntie's War Tale* (1897), taking the name from the Stone plantation. She also published stories in *Harper's, Century*, and other magazines. She wrote the "Tennessee Centennial Ode" (1896) and the "Jefferson Davis Centennial Ode" (1908).—*Library of Southern Literature*, II, 463-89.

teering back on the Macon. He is trying to raise a company and is getting an office in it. He will go as soon as possible. He and Mr. Catlin were here yesterday. Mamma subscribed 100 barrels of corn. When the two Mr. Valentines become enthusiastic warriors, times are growing warm. I did not see them—it was a business visit—and I had a rising on my face. Nothing but war talked of and companies are forming all through the country.

Mr. Davies, *L'adorable*, who is on a visit to Dr. Carson, and Mr. McNeely spent the morning with us—two young ministers. Mr. Davies looks just as he did a year ago, except for his ravishing black mustache, and is as delightful as ever. He is wild to join the army but has his mother and four grown sisters absolutely dependent on him, and it seems impossible for him to get off. He says it is much harder to stay at home than to go.

Joe Carson is crazy to join the army. He cannot study, cannot think of anything else, but his parents will not consent. He is most wretched. The overseers and that class of men are abusing him roundly among themselves—a rich man's son too good to fight the battles of the rich—let the rich men go who are most interested—they will stay at home. Such craven spirits. So few overseers have gone.¹⁹

Joe and Robert spent Wednesday evening. Brother Coley, just home, says Aunt Laura and Cousin Jenny are in the depths of despair. Cousin Jenny is grieving over the separation from her sister. They have been together all their lives. And Aunt Laura is grieving over Dr. Buckner's going away, but she realizes it is his duty and will not beg him to stay. Cousin Jenny has given up her visit to us. As soon as her father, Uncle Austin, comes for her, she will join her sister in camp. An imploring message from Aunt Laura begging me to come down and stay with her.

Thursday we made two blue shirts for Brother Coley. Nearly all we can do for him. Made a comfort bag for him, one for Mr. Valentine, and will now make one for Robert.

¹⁹ This paragraph affords interesting evidence that even before the passage of the First Conscription Act the middle and poorer classes thought the planters were not bearing their share of the war burden.

March 2: Mr. Stenckrath is making himself wretched these last few days. He feels that he should join the army and he has not the requisite courage. He says, "It is a dreadful thing, Mees Kate, to go and be shoot at." He is always harping on the dangers and trials of a soldier's life and his funny ways amuse us all. He says ill health will keep him here, and he is the picture of manly strength but is imagining himself into becoming a confirmed invalid. He says, "Mees Kate is driving me to the war. She talk so much about men going and I so sensitive it move me silent for half an hour." He says, "I brave man but I no want to be shoot." To look at it dispassionately, there does seem to be no reason why a foreigner, only here to teach and most probably opposed to all our institutions, should be expected to fight for our independence. And I really do not think it Mr. Stenckrath's duty to go, but he will take all we say about other men who are shirking their duty as personal to him. And when we are all on fire with the subject, we cannot bridle our tongues all the time.

Well, Columbus [Ky.] is abandoned and with it Tennessee. Our Columbus army, without a shot or shell on either side, has retired to Island No. 10²⁰ and the Nashville army has fallen back to Decatur, Ala. They say the Island is much better adapted for defense than Columbus. Then how much time and money has been wasted at Columbus. How we would like to have a letter from Cousin Titia. I suppose she leads the retreat.

Robert came home with Brother Coley tonight. They must go to Vicksburg tomorrow. Robert is in much better spirits and Brother Coley is jubliant.

March 8: Brother Coley and Robert got off just at sunrise. It was cold but they were well wrapped up. Robert returned the next day but Brother Coley is still there expecting to leave every day. Dr. Carson gave five bales of cotton to Dr. Buckner's company and a horse, which Robert rode

²⁰ In the Mississippi River between Columbus, Ky., and New Madrid, Mo. The island commanded passage of the river.

down, but he will not allow Joe to join and the boy is nearly distracted with mortification and chagrin.

Mamma finished her silk quilt. I helped three days and then begged off. Quilting is a fearsome job. Have finished making the three "friends."

Mr. Valentine failed to get an office in the company and we fear he will not go and that will make him fearfully unpopular with all classes. If we could see him, I am sure we could influence him. For his own sake he must join. Mr. Catlin's last feint is that he will join a gunboat now in the docks. Robert has joined Sweet's Artillery of Vicksburg and will get off Thursday.

Mamma and I went out by special invitation merely to call on the bride and Miss Lily and then to dine at Mrs. Carson's, but Mrs. Savage would not hear of our leaving. She made us spend the day—and a long, dull day it was, and so cold. We were the only invited guests for the day, but there are still sixteen grown people and numbers of children staying in the house. The dinner table was set on the back gallery. The bride had on a lovely dress of light blue silk with a silvery sheen, trimmed with dark blue velvet, black lace, and steel buckles. She looked as usual, sour and disagreeable, and was very silent, as was the groom. His powers of interrogation have not failed him. Talking alone with him, his first query was did I think his wife was handsome? With my opinion of Mrs. Lily's looks it was "rather a staggerer," as I have a due regard for truth. I evaded the question and he then wanted to know did I think her as good looking as he is? I could truthfully answer yes as Dr. Lily is not to say pretty. Still he was not satisfied but I cut the conversation short, tired of such a personal catechism.

Miss Lily is distinctly commonplace, rather a "muggins" and wears the oddest hairdress. Miss Bettie's coiffure is mild compared to it. Rose attacked me for having said I thought Dr. Lily should go to the army. No doubt I have said so, for I certainly think it and am still of the same opinion, but I had not been rude enough to tell him so. With all of our relations going out to fight, I am not apt to think other men should sit comfortably at home.

Dr. Meagher was on hand, the handsomest, nicest looking of the lot. I told Anna I approved of her taste and if I had the opportunity might set my cap for him, a rival of hers. She declared there is nothing between them but there surely will be if they see much more of each other. All Mrs. Savage's visitors leave today. The bride and groom go to Baton Rouge to visit his people.

We called on Mrs. Carson and met Mrs. Rutherford. Her husband is the Presbyterian minister. He came up to perform the ceremony and Mrs. Rutherford came with him. She is an agreeable Kentucky lady. She gave us pleasant news of My Brother. She says he has been highly complimented by his superior officers.

Mr. Stenckrath does not improve on acquaintance. He is very high tempered and irritable and so sensitive on the subject of the war. He says he cannot bear to hear us talk of it, which is too absurd, as if we could help talking in our own home circle of the most important and stirring facts in the world to us. He wants us to ignore the existence of any war and prattle on of the commonplaces of life as though victory and defeat, suffering and death, had never been heard of. He came back from Goodrich's this evening wrought up to the highest pitch of rage and excitement. He had to drill with the militia and came back anathematizing on the militia, the officers, and everything connected with it. The greatest egotist, applies everything said to himself—a hypochondriac. He complains all the time, often of an agonizing pain in his *toe*. But enough of this tiresome man!

We hear of a victory for us at Boston Mountain, Ark.²¹ No particulars. No news for days. The boats are all detained at Columbus removing government stores. The papers are making most stirring appeals to the people to give and to enlist. The *Whig* is most eloquent. A busy week for all of us. With morn comes toil but night brings rest.

March 9: Brother Coley came this evening. He will join

²¹ Pea Ridge, Ark., March 5-8, 1862. Pea Ridge was in reality a Confederate reverse.

his company Tuesday and they will leave for Jackson, Miss., Thursday and shortly after go to Jackson, Tenn.

Cousin Jenny joins her sister at Jackson, Tenn. Cousin Titia was not at Columbus. Her husband left her at Memphis.

Brother Coley likes his company quite well. He says there are about twenty nice gentlemen belonging to it. We laugh at him about his aristocratic officers—one a liverystable keeper, one an overseer, and the other "a bold butcher boy."

All of us but Mamma went out to the Lodge to hear Mr. Rutherford preach. He is a pleasant talker and there was a large congregation. Better than all there were *three soldiers in their uniforms*, the two Mr. Buckners, one a captain and the other some officer, and a perfect love of a lieutenant in blue uniform and brass buttons galore. Six feet of soldier with brass buttons is irresistible, and all the girls capitulated at once. Did not hear his name and my prophetic soul tells me he is married. Oh! me. He is one of the escaped heroes of Fort Donelson. He aroused my liveliest sympathy by being compelled to balance himself on a backless bench during the entire service. Is that the way to make our heroes love church?

May 9: After two months of silence I will resume my homely chronicles. Reading over the nonsense of the last page, how sad it seems now, for the Lt. Davis mentioned with such jesting is dead far away from his mother—"an only son and she a widow." He escaped at the siege of Donelson only to come home with Capt. Buckner to fall a prey to a long, lingering illness and die at last among strangers.

Two days after my last date [March 9], Mamma, Brother Coley, Brother Walter, and I went down by land to Vicksburg. Brother Coley joined his company as a private with Capt. C. B. Buckner as captain. In a few days they left for Jackson, Miss., where they still are, and Mamma and Brother Walter returned home. I remained with Aunt Laura until last week when Brother Walter came down in the carriage

for me, and, after moving adventures by field and flood, we reached home safely.

How many stirring events are crowded into the last sixty days: Our victory in Hampton Roads; ²² the two-day battle and victory at Shiloh; the fall of several of our small towns on the coast; the long bombardment, heroic defense, and final surrender of Island No. 10; ²³ the attack on and successful defense of Fort Pillow; ²⁴ and last and most important of all the long and terrible bombardment of Fort Jackson with the passing of the gunboats under heaviest fire and then the investure and fall of the greatest City of the South, New Orleans.²⁵ And not a blow struck in its defense. Such was not its fate in the days of Jackson.

As a natural consequence of her surrender, the forts also gave up, and fair Louisiana with her fertile fields of cane and cotton, her many bayous and dark old forests, lies powerless at the feet of the enemy. Though the Yankees have gained the land, the people are determined they shall not have its wealth, and from every plantation rises the smoke of burning cotton. The order from Beauregard advising the destruction of the cotton met with a ready response from the people, most of them agreeing that it is the only thing to do. As far as we can see are the ascending wreaths of smoke, and we hear that all the cotton of the Mississippi Valley from Memphis to New Orleans is going up in smoke. We have found it is hard to burn bales of cotton. They will smoulder for days. So the huge bales are cut open before they are lighted and the old cottons burns slowly. It has to be stirred and

²² At Hampton Roads, Va., the Confederate ironclad *Merrimac* attacked the Federal Blockading Squadron.

²³ Shiloh (Pittsburg Landing), Tenn., April 6-7; Island No. 10, Tenn., April 8, 1862. Again, in the case of Shiloh, Kate, influenced by inaccurate press accounts, calls a reverse a victory.

²⁴ On the Mississippi between Memphis and Island No. 10.

²⁵ April 18-29, 1862. With a population of 168,875, New Orleans was the largest city in the Confederacy and was the port of entry for Arkansas, Louisiana, and north Texas, from which the Confederacy received badly needed food. Union strategy from the first included cutting the Confederacy in two by seizing the Mississippi. That now seemed possible with the fall of the forts above Memphis.

turned over but the light cotton from the lint room goes like a flash. We should know, for Mamma has \$20,000 worth burning on the gin ridge now; it was set on fire yesterday and is still blazing.

Though agreeing on the necessity of destroying the cotton, all regret it. And it has thrown a gloom over the country that nothing but news of a great victory could lighten. We are watching and praying for that. The planters look upon the burning of the cotton as almost ruin to their fortunes, but all realize its stern necessity and we have not heard of one trying to evade it.

The Yankee gunboats are expected to appear before Vicksburg today, and every effort is being made to "welcome them with bloody hands to hospitable graves." It seems hopeless to make a stand at Vicksburg. We only hope they may burn the city if they meet with any resistance. How much better to burn our cities than let them fall into the enemy's hands.

To resume the earlier record: Two weeks after Dr. Buckner's company left Vicksburg, Aunt Laura, Beverly, and I went to Jackson to pay them a visit and spent a week at the Bowman House, a comfortable hotel for these times. I enjoyed the stay greatly. Saw so many soldiers and other nice people. And it was such a time of excitement, just after the battle of Shiloh, and we met so many men and officers who were in the fight: Maj. McCardle, whom we heard acted gallantly, Col. Ferguson, aide to Beauregard and lieutenant colonel of Stark's regiment (the one Dr. Buckner's company is in), also mentioned with great praise. He is—almost—my *beau ideal* in looks and manner, a West Pointer. I came near losing my heart to him. Just hadn't time. He was ordered off so soon.

The cars were crowded for days with wounded soldiers going home and relatives going on to see their wounded friends. Col. Ferguson was a lieutenant of Dragoons stationed on the extreme western border when he heard, after two months, of Lincoln's election and resigned at once. And after a journey of two months he reached South Carolina, his native state, just in time to act as one of Gen. Beauregard's

aides during the bombardment of Fort Sumter. He was recently appointed lieutenant colonel of Stark's regiment. Beauregard telegraphed him just before the battle and he went up and acted as his aide during the two days. Dr. Buckner likes him and Brother Coley likes him as far as he knows him. But Col. Ferguson is a regular West Pointer in discipline and Brother Coley is but a private to him. He is fired with most eager ambition and thirst for distinction. He has an air of frankness and the most engaging freshness and naiveté in conversation I ever saw in a man. He is tall, handsome, about twenty-six, susceptible, a South Carolinian, and a lieutenant colonel—a most fascinating combination. But I will wait until I see him again before really losing my heart. I made a pretty tobacco bag for him and sent it without my name. He will be puzzled.²⁶ Also made one for Aunt Laura to give Maj. McCardle. Also made embroidered green covers for Brother Coley and his friend Ben Ricks's canteens. They said it would keep their water cooler. Ben Ricks of Yazoo is a nice young fellow, a good friend for Brother Coley. Saw him several times.

Brother and Uncle Bo, both at Yorktown, sent on to reinforce Gen. Magruder. A great battle is expected there any day now. My Brother's company has been exchanged with Col. Taylor's battalion. He likes Col. Taylor very much and is glad of the change.

The troops at Yorktown have undergone great hardships, particularly the Leesburg Brigade. The flower of both armies with the best generals are stationed within a few miles of each other and the great battle of the war is soon to be fought. And our hearts are heavy with anxiety for our two soldiers who will be in it. Grant a victory, 'Father, we pray.

²⁶ Kate's description of Colonel Thomas Barker Ferguson is somewhat in error. He attended South Carolina Military Academy, not West Point, and entered the Confederate service as an engineer, helping construct the batteries at Fort Sumter in April, 1861. Promoted to major before he was twenty-five, he was shot through the lungs while commanding the artillery of Walker's division at Jackson, Miss., in 1862, but recovered. In 1867 he married Jane Byrd, daughter of Governor Thomas Swann of Maryland.—*Dictionary of American Biography*, VI, 332-33.

The conscription has caused a great commotion and great consternation among the shirking stay-at-homes. Around here, many are deluding themselves with the belief that the call will not be enforced in Louisiana now that New Orleans has fallen and Vicksburg is threatened. We are to make a stand there. A weak one, I fear.

We earnestly hope these coward souls will be made to go. They are not joining volunteer companies as most of the conscripts are. They will not even raise a guerrilla troop for home defense. Not a single man has joined for the last two months. I forgot George Hardison, who is under age, and several men from the Bend.

May 10: The smoke of the burning cotton is still rising as far as we can see. For the last five days the air has been heavy with the smoke and odor of burned cloth. There is still a day's work here before the last bale is ashes. Mamma has reserved about eight bales for spinning and making cloth for the hands.

I must tell an adventure returning ten days ago from Vicksburg. Brother Walter came for me, with Webster driving, when I had about given up hope of seeing Brokenburn again for many months as the Yankees were hourly expected in Vicksburg. Numbers of people were leaving the city and Aunt Laura was preparing to go on the next train to Jackson to be with Dr. Buckner. I would have been forced to go with her. I could not remain in Vicksburg or with the Nailors in the country, perhaps for months, and so I was relieved when Brother Walter walked in. The next morning we crossed the ferry and were just driving up the road when we were stopped by the news that the Vicksburg levee had broken. Already the river road was impassable and in the course of two hours the water would be over DeSoto. We were horrified but told Webster to turn around and rush as fast as he could to the depot at Mr. Burney's. Fortunately, we reached there just in time to catch the train and the last one it proved to be for many a day. There was a great crowd of parish people and people going on to Monroe and Texas. Such excitement! First it was said that the train would be

cut off by the water, and then that we would be fired on or captured by a Yankee gunboat. They were momentarily expected and there were many false alarms of their being in sight. We shipped everything on a flat car—mules, carriage, Webster—and about two or three the train pulled out. We reached Tallulah station rather late. Met several friends on the train who begged us to get off and spend the night—the Dancys, Colemans, etc. But I thought in these troublous times home was the best place. So we drove on as far as Mrs. Gustine's above the Bend, and as it was then quite dark we stayed with them all night, Brother Walter going on home to relieve Mamma's anxiety. They were very cordial. Had a pleasant visit.

It was the last trip the cars can make until the river falls. We came through water so deep that it nearly came in the coaches. They were crowded. In the car with us was a guerilla captain going to Texas to raise a company. He had just escaped from New Orleans with several men of his command. He said they burned several thousand bales of cotton and other supplies. He was so excited and eager and talked so well of everything he had seen or heard in New Orleans. He is from New Orleans and his heart and soul are with the Cause.

Mamma was charmed to get us home again when we arrived next day. The day before Mr. Catlin had ridden by to tell her that we were cut off by the break in the levee and that the Yankees were in Vicksburg. She was wretched not knowing what we would do.

While in Vicksburg I went out and spent a few days with Pattie Booth. What a delightful home they have and the loveliest flower garden, nearly equals Mrs. Savage's. While there we attended a meeting to get up a fair and I met a number of my old schoolmates of Nashville days. We had just heard of the dastardly outrage offered Dr. Elliott, the principal of our school then, and we held a little meeting and passed resolutions of sympathy. But he can never get them. Met at Mrs. Booth's Mr. Philo Valentine, a brother of our Oasis friend, the elder, also a brother of Mrs. Booth. He is most agreeable and an assistant surgeon in the C. S. A.

Kate Nailor spent several days with us at Aunt Laura's. She is looking dreadful but is as lovely as ever. She is soon to be married to Wilkins Roach and much I fear her heart is not in it. He is very wealthy and her family are urging it on, but her heart is in Virginia with My Brother. But they have had a quarrel and now it can never be set right, because in a fit of jealousy and pique she is throwing herself away on a man she barely likes. Poor Kate! And poor absent lover! They have been sweethearts for years.

May 11: The news of the day is a rumored skirmish and evacuation of Yorktown, an advance of Morgan and Forrest with their cavalry troops on Nashville and Paducah to destroy government stores, and the falling back of the Yankee gunboats to New Orleans instead of attacking Vicksburg. That will give time to finish the fortifications at Vicksburg which are going up rapidly.²⁷ We have seen Butler's Proclamation on taking possession of New Orleans and as he has the cool impudence to say "of the State of Louisiana." It is a most tyrannical and insulting document and shows what mercy we may expect if subjugated. It made my blood boil to read it and I could cry when I think of New Orleans completely in his power. Let us hope this will rouse the spirit of the people who still linger at home and send them to the battlefield. How can anyone in the South ever fall so low as to take such an oath of allegiance?²⁸

May 12: We went yesterday to church and on our return found Mr. Stockton and the two Messrs. Valentine comfort-

²⁷ Strengthening of the fortifications at Vicksburg started immediately after the fall of New Orleans. Back of the two-hundred foot bluff on which the city stands is a series of hills and narrow ridges, natural fortifications that lent themselves to defense. Batteries of heavy guns were placed below the city to command the river. Batteries on the bluff commanded the river immediately in front of the town. These emplacements were strengthened, new guns were placed in position, and bomb-proof magazines built into the ridges and hills.—"The Defense of Vicksburg," *Battles and Leaders*, III, 482-83.

²⁸ On May 1 General B. F. Butler issued a proclamation in taking possession of New Orleans in the name of the national government. He invited any so disposed to take an oath of allegiance.—Benjamin F. Butler, *Butler's Book* (Boston, 1892), 379-82.

ably ensconced in the parlor waiting for us to come and entertain them until sundown. After they left I felt like a hard Monday's work had been done, but we still had three letters to write to our soldiers to meet the only regular mail since my return. Today my eyes are so tired. Joe Carson and Mr. Baker spent Saturday evening with us.

We will commence on some clothes for My Brother tomorrow. He certainly did laugh over the gay red and yellow flannel suits we sent him in the fall. He did not wear them at all but gave them to Uncle Bo who sported around in them to the delight of the whole camp where they were a great joke. We will do better this time. The gloves with the open fingers were a flat failure. It seems soldiers are not always in a hurry or always shooting guns. They always have time to take off the gloves when necessary to use their fingers. As the Negroes say, "live and larn."

Tried this morning to get to the Bend to see Julia but the backwater prevented; I came home but Jimmy braved it all and went on. Mamma and I have commenced enjoying our summer siestas and just as we had lain down, cool and comfortably undressed, Mrs. Fontaine and her five sons came in to spend the afternoon.

May 16: Heard nothing new. All are busy sewing on My Brother's shirts and plaiting hats, hurrying as fast as possible to get them off to Vicksburg before the Yankees take the city. Jimmy and Sister are both plaiting for a hat for Uncle Bo.

Mamma and I rode up to Mrs. Hardison's for a short visit yesterday evening. I never saw such a quantity of beautiful ripe strawberries. The levee running through the garden is positively red with them.

The backwater is slowly creeping up. But the Negroes are leveeing against it and we hope to keep it out. Today is a fast day and we are all going to church. Most of us keep the fast, though the boys find it hard. Mamma is calling me to get ready for church.

May 17: Norfolk has been abandoned and in consequence

the *Merrimac* had to be burned to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy.

The gunboats came up to Natchez and demanded the surrender but on the refusal of the authorities anchored out in front of the town. One went back to New Orleans, perhaps for orders. We hear that Brother Coley's company has been sent back to Vicksburg but no scrap of a letter from the dear little boy.

Met at church yesterday an old classmate from Nashville, Sue McNairy, a refugee. Mrs. Carson introduced us to Mrs. Gen. Buckner, Mrs. Gen. McIntosh, Mrs. Keene, and Mrs. Tibbetts. Mrs. Buckner and Mrs. McIntosh are staying with some of them until they can rejoin their husbands. Mrs. Carson was in her element introducing them to everybody in church. We are invited to spend today at Mrs. Savage's to meet Sue McNairy.

The Negroes on that place have measles but it is confined as yet to the quarters.

May 19: Spent the night at Mrs. Savage's. Sue did not come, much to my disappointment, as I wanted to have a long talk with her about our classmates. A storm prevented her. Natchez has surrendered and the gunboats are now above Rodney.²⁹ We listen hourly for the cannonading to begin at Vicksburg. Surely the gallant Mississippians will not give up their chief city without a struggle.

*Better the fire above the roll,
Better the shot, the blade, the bowl,
Than crucifixion of the Soul.*

Better one desperate battle and the city in flames than tame submission.

Brother Walter went out to Omega to send a letter by the mail rider to Brother Coley. No news from them.

I went up to Mrs. Hardison's to get some pinking done and have been working all the rest of the day on my black barège dress.

We heard the barking of cannon today and thought at first

²⁹ Natchez surrendered May 12, 1862.

the fight was on at Vicksburg, but the firing was so slow we think now they were only getting the range of the guns.

May 20: The flower garden is one mass of blooms now and the fragrance on the front gallery is delicious. Uncle Hoccas is very proud of his promising vegetables. But we hear there is great danger of the levee giving away just in front of us, and in that case farewell to gardens, orchards, crops, and everything. The levee for two miles is in a wretched state, but the planters have put all the available men on it and are working hard. They may save the day.

May 22: All yesterday and today we have heard cannonading at Vicksburg, sometimes so faint that it is more a vibration than a noise and again quite a loud, clear report. Oh, if we could only know just what is going on there.³⁰ But it may be days before we get any authentic accounts. We do not know the importance of holding Vicksburg. We know nothing of the plans. Some say the resistance there is only a feint to give Beauregard more time at Corinth, Miss., but we hope it is a desperate attempt to hold the city against all odds. We are sick of hearing of these prudent, cautious retreats without firing a gun. Our only hope is in desperate fighting. We are so outnumbered. We think Dr. Buckner's company is in Vicksburg, but being cavalry they may not be engaged.

Evening. Brother Walter rode out on the dangerous levee and he thinks it will hold. Heard that the attack on Vicksburg will be made this evening at 3 o'clock, the enemy landing at Warrenton and coming in the rear of the city. Brother Walter is almost wild to take part in the battle there. He has been in tears about it for the last week. This evening he has defied all control and taken the reins in his own hand. He has gone out to the river if possible to get a seat in some skiff going down. He says he must and will be in that fight, but we are not very anxious about him. We are sure all skiffs leaving Pecan Grove will have gotten away long before

³⁰ As Kate notes later, this firing was being done by Confederate artillerists testing guns.

he reaches there, as it was two when he left. Mamma gave him some money but he took no clothes. He will be compelled to return soon. But Mamma feels that before many days she will be called on to give up this her third son to fight for his country.

It seems useless to have a teacher. The boys left at home cannot settle to any work and who can blame them.

All the boats stopped running three weeks ago on the fall of New Orleans and we have not had a mail since. There is no communication with anywhere except by skiff as the levees are broken between here and Vicksburg.

All the boys are out on the river and we expect them to bring Anna Dobbs back with them to stay a few days. It seems odd to be expecting company and no flour or any "boughten" delicacy to regale them on, but we have been on a strict "war footing" for some time—cornbread and home-raised meal, milk and butter, tea once a day, and coffee never. A year ago we would have considered it impossible to get on for a day without the things that we have been doing without for months. Fortunately we have sugar and molasses, and after all it is not such hard living. Common cornbread admits of many variations in the hands of a good cook—eggbread (we have lots of eggs), muffins, cakes, and so on. Fat meat will be unmitigated fat meat, but one need not eat it. And there are chickens, occasional partridges, and other birds, and often venison, vegetables of all kinds minus potatoes; and last but not least, knowing there is no help for it makes one content. There is hardly a family in the parish using flour constantly. All kept some for awhile for company and for the sick, but it is about exhausted now.³¹

Clothes have become a secondary consideration. Fashion is an obsolete word and just to be decently clad is all we expect. The change in dress, habits, and customs is nowhere

³¹ Shortage of flour became general through the Confederacy early in the war. Numerous substitutes were tried, rice flour, cornmeal, hominy, pea-meal, sorghum flour, "pumpkin bread," acorns, persimmons, clover, and lilies. Most people used cornmeal.—Mary Elizabeth Massey, *Ersatz in the Confederacy* (Columbia, S. C., 1952), 68-69.

more striking than in the towns.³² A year ago a gentleman never thought of carrying a bundle, even a small one, through the streets. Broadcloth was *de rigueur*. Ceremony and fashion ruled in the land. Presto-change. Now the highest in rank may be seen doing any kind of work that their hands find to do. The men have become "hewers of wood and drawers of water" and pack bundles of all sorts and sizes. It may be a pile of blankets, a stack of buckets, or a dozen bundles. One gentleman I saw walking down the street in Jackson, and a splendid-looking fellow he was, had a piece of fish in one hand, a cavalry saddle on his back, bridle, blankets, newspapers, and a small parcel in the other hand; and over his shoulder swung an immense pair of cavalry boots. And nobody thought he looked odd. Their willingness to fetch and carry is only limited by their strength. All the soldiers one sees when traveling are loaded down with canteen, knapsack, haversack, and blankets. Broadcloth is worn only by the drones and fireside braves. Dyed linsey is now the fashionable material for coats and pants. Vests are done away with, colored flannel, merino, or silk overshirts taking the place. A gentleman thinks nothing of calling on half a dozen young ladies dressed in home-dyed Negro cloth and blue checked shirt. If there is a button or stripe to show that he is one of his country's defenders, he is sure of warmest welcome. Another stops to talk to a bevy of ladies. He is laden down with a package of socks and tin plates that he is carrying out to camp, and he shifts the bundles from side to side as he grows interested and his arms get tired. In proportion as we have been a race of haughty, indolent, and waited-on people, so now are we ready to do away with all forms and work and wait on ourselves.

The Southerners are a noble race, let them be reviled as they may, and I thank God that He has given my birthplace in this fair land among these gallant people and in a time when I can show my devotion to my Country.

³² Though shortage of clothing developed more slowly than shortage of food, eventually civilians had difficulty in being "decently clad."—*Ibid.*, 79-98.

May 23: Have heard of my darling Katie's marriage. Who would have thought after our long close intimacy that I would hear of her wedding only by accident. I know she has written me everything but no letters come now. So have passed our dreams of sisterhood. I hope—oh how I hope—she has been able to forget the old love and is content with the new. May my dear girl be happy. God bless her and hers. I shall miss her out of my life, my dearest girl friend. How it will affect My Brother I can hardly say, but I have thought of late he had given up his love dream and was willing to take the dismissal he forced upon her.

Brother Walter could not get off, greatly to his chagrin. He brought us the *Whig* of last Tuesday containing the correspondence of the authorities of Natchez and Vicksburg with the Yankees. The first city says you can take us if you will but under protest; we can do nothing. The second city says we will fight to the last. The gunboats have been at Vicksburg for a week and have secured their answer to the demand to surrender some days ago, but there has been no bombardment. What we heard was the artillery men trying their guns.

In the *Whig* is Butler's last infamous proclamation. It seems that the openly expressed scorn and hatred of the New Orleans women for Butler's vandal hordes has so exasperated him that he issues this proclamation: That henceforth if any female by word, look, or gesture, shall insult any of his soldiers, the soldier shall have perfect liberty to do with her as he pleases. Could any order be more infamous? It is but carrying out the battle cry "Bounty and Beauty" with which they started for New Orleans. May he not long pollute the soil of Louisiana.³³

The levee is still very insecure with the river rising and the

³³ General Butler's General Order No. 28, the famous "woman order," issued May 15, 1862, stated: "As officers and soldiers of the United States have been subject to repeated insults from women, calling themselves ladies, of New Orleans in return for the most scrupulous non-interference and courtesy on our part, it is ordered hereafter, when any female shall, by mere gesture or movement, insult, or show contempt for any officers or soldiers of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman about the town plying her vocation."—*Butler's Book*, 414-19.

rains bad on it. Many plantation hands are at work on it all the time and the owners watching it anxiously. We are almost overflowed from rain water as the ditches had to be stopped to keep out backwater.

A note from Julia. They are washed out of house and home and are staying with Mrs. Maher. She would visit us could she get here. I wish she could. I cling to my other girl friends now that Kate is gone.

Have done much reading lately in borrowed books. *The Huguenots*³⁴ by James quite interesting; *Caste*,³⁵ a hateful, disgusting work on slavery of course and nothing true; the shady side of life in a country parsonage, descriptive of the life of a Northern minister does to read when there is nothing else; and *The Widow Bidott Papers*,³⁶ very amusing for awhile. Now I am on *Rob Roy*,³⁷ worth all the books ever written in Yankeedom.

I have plaited one hat for My Brother, but as we have had no opportunity to send his clothes, Jimmy has taken possession of it. Have started plaiting a very fine one for Brother Coley.

May 25: Everything shines out bright and fair in the spring sunshine after the gloom of the last few days. The flowers wave and glisten most invitingly across the grass beyond the shadows of the great oaks, but it is too wet to venture over Nature's carpeting of soft, green grass. This evening we may plan what we please. The levees having stood so far we think will stand faithfully to the end. They have certainly been found faithful among few.

Brother Walter went yesterday to get Mr. Mark Valentine to accompany him to Vicksburg to join in the fight there. He found him willing as he said and anxious to go, but actually Mr. Valentine had not had the energy to make the

³⁴ *The Huguenots; or, The French Protestants* (1838), a novel by G. P. R. James (1799-1860).

³⁵ A short novel by Emily Jolly published in London, 1857.

³⁶ Originally published as a series of humorous sketches in magazines in the 1840's, the book by Frances Miriam Whitcher (1812-52) was published in 1855.

³⁷ By Sir Walter Scott, published in 1817.

necessary arrangement to get off. He needed someone like Brother Walter, who is only seventeen, to give him an impetus. Brother Walter is in better mood and confident of getting up a party and starting tomorrow. Dr. Lily, Mr. McNeely, Mr. Baker, and Capt. Buckner went down two days ago, and Brother Walter was so dreadfully disappointed at not getting off with them.

May 26: All went to church yesterday. Mr. Holbury has started a Sunday school and Little Sister is eager to join it. Found the two Mr. Valentines awaiting us. Sunday is their visiting day. Old Mr. Valentine is very despondent, foretelling the most abject poverty and starvation for the whole country. He came over to try and induce Mamma to have all the cotton plowed up in order to plant corn and to beg her not to let Brother Walter go to Vicksburg. He says, "Mark shall not go." He has made himself very unpopular by his bitter opposition to the cotton burning and by not allowing his son to join the army. There is no doubt he should go at once. Some actually think Mr. Valentine is in favor of our enemies and advocate hanging him by mob law. A most unjust report and utterly without foundation. I suppose his being of Northern birth increases the prejudice. The old gentleman we do not know very well, but we know the young one well and all like him immensely.

In the afternoon there was a cry raised that there was a bear in the cane. The boys with their dogs and guns turned out in force, assisted by Mr. McRae, Ben Clarkson, as did all the Negroes who could get mules, while the others armed themselves with axes and sticks and cautiously approached the outskirts. The excitement ran high and we at the house had full benefit as it was in the canebrake just back of the yard. We could hear the barking of the dogs, the reports of the guns, and the cries and shouts of the whole party. It was very exhilarating. They returned in the highest state of excitement but without the bear. They went out next morning but with no better success.

Brother Walter has given up the idea of going to war just now.

May 28: Yesterday evening and far into the night we heard the roar of cannonading more distinct and rapid than ever heard before. It must be at Vicksburg. Today all is quiet. One understands after hearing the long rolling booms how deafening it must be on a battlefield. Mrs. Abe Curry, Sue, and Mrs. Hazelitt spent yesterday with us and it passed very agreeably. The gentlemen who went to Vicksburg from Pecan Grove are back. They saw none of our friends. Dr. Buckner's company is on picket duty near Warrenton.

The river is falling all the way down and we are saved from overflow this year.

Papers and letters this evening, a month old.

May 30: We have a paper of the twenty-seventh. It brings the good news of a battle or surprise by Stonewall Jackson at Winchester and Front Royal and the capture of all the stores at the former place and many prisoners. All the news is rather encouraging. We are holding our own at Fort Pillow. At Corinth the enemy are reported in retreat to their gunboats which, now that the Tennessee River is falling, they are compelled to get out at once. All is well in Virginia. And nearer home at Vicksburg there is nothing to discourage us. The slight shelling did no harm, and the soldiers are full of hope and anxious for the Yankees to land to give them the "worst beating they ever had in their lives."

We hear the men behaved awfully at Warrenton, burned the property of Mr. Walker and Mr. Turner and put them in prison.

My Brother and Uncle Bo have been gone just a year and what a year of changes. Nature smiles as bright and fair now as under the May sun of a year ago, but where are all "the loved ones who filled our home with glee?" Four of the dear familiar faces are absent. One sleeps the sleep that knows no waking. For him we have no more fear or trouble, for we know he has passed from Death into Life—that "all is well with the child." But oh, the weary days of waiting and watching for the other three.

Jimmy brought us two recent letters from My Brother. He encloses some violets gathered from the old trenches

around Yorktown, dug there by Washington's army. His tent stands just where Cornwallis gave up his sword. What supreme satisfaction if McClellan could be induced to do the same thing at the same place. They say history repeats itself.³⁸ My Brother takes a most elderly brother tone regarding Tom Manlove's love affairs. Four months ago Tom was desperate about Miss Eva, and now Miss Flora reigns sole empress of his heart—for the next month. But My Brother need not be critical, as he is not so constant himself. He so regrets leaving Uncle Bo. They are now in different commands. He is anxious to get his clothes and speaks confidently of coming home.

Jimmy brought Julia as far as Mrs. Hardison's. She will come on in the cool of evening.

June 6: Nothing startling during the week. Julia is with us. The usual routine, visiting and receiving visits. Received this evening a late Vicksburg *Whig*. A good deal of interest. A number of shot and shell thrown but no material injury. One shot went through the Methodist church.

Brother Walter went to Pecan Grove and Jimmy to the Bend trying to get molasses, but none to be had. Rumors are that the people at Baton Rouge, Natchez, and New Orleans had risen en masse and killed Butler and all his soldiers. We hoped—I had almost said prayed—that it might be so, but I am not yet so hardened that I can pray even for a Yankee's death. We learned soon after that it was only a canard.

We caught a pretty lot of fish out of the bayou just out in front of the house. Julia was the most successful fisherman.

All are busy plaiting for hats. Mamma does the sewing. The palmetto is beautifully white and soft after bleaching. Have plaited three and a basket recently—one beautifully fine one for Mamma to give Mr. Valentine—and am busy now on one for Sister. Shall make an exceedingly fine one for Col. Ferguson if I have luck.

³⁸ Kate's brother was in the Confederate Army opposing General George B. McClellan's advance on Richmond on the line of the York River.

Thursday we were all up betimes and Julia, Jimmy, Johnny, and I set off before 7 o'clock to fish at the head of Grassy Lake. The ride in the cool morning air through the dark still woods, sweet with the breath of the wild grape blossoms, and in such merry company, was a thing to enjoy. We stopped to gather the first blackberries, cool and wet with dew. How often I think of Ashburn when the pleasures he so enjoyed a year ago are in the world again. How many a merry ride we have taken together, enjoying all the sights and sounds of spring. Dear heart, I know he is happy now beyond our dreams of bliss, but oh, to see him once more now that spring is in the land.

The ride home through Oasis was just perfect. On one side were the tall colonnades of cypress and on the other the far reaching rows of waving corn, emerald in the sun. The horses were fleet and free as the wind that fanned us, and a smooth, hard road rang like metal under the hoofs of the horses. We had just time to dress and get comfortably settled in the front hall with our plaiting all around us and were telling Mamma our morning's adventures when Mr. Valentine came in. His first remark was "How cool and pleasant you all look." He stayed until ten at night and made himself very agreeable. In the afternoon we left him to Brother Walter while we took our usual evening rest. They played chess and backgammon and later we had music, conversation, and cards. He much regretted not joining us on our morning ride. He failed only because he knew nothing of it and did not see us as we galloped through his place half a mile from his home. Naturally he did not.

Letters from My Brother and Capt. Manlove dated May 20 at Richmond. He told us of their marching from Yorktown and the fight they were in at Williamsburg. Both escaped unwounded. He wrote us of our one-time friend, Mr. Hewitt. He is passing himself off in Nashville as a wealthy Louisiana planter and as a colonel of a Mississippi regiment taken at Donelson and on parole. He is engaged to be married to one of the nice girls of Nashville. He is such a dreadful fraud, a perfect adventurer, and we think gets

married at nearly every town in which he spends a month. He is very handsome, tall and blond, with delightful manners and always manages to get in with the best people. My Brother took the liberty of writing to the girl's father a full account of Mr. Hewitt, and we hope the girl will be saved.

The Jeff Davis Guards were highly complimented for their gallantry on the field of Williamsburg and Capt. Tom Manlove is praised for his heroism in battle. His father, Capt. Manlove, wrote Mamma about it, and we saw it afterwards in Wednesday's *Whig*. Such a gratification to his father. The battalions were in the two days at Chickahominy.³⁹ All the officers escaped unhurt except the 3rd lieutenant who was killed. I think that is Lt. Floyd, to whom we sent things in My Brother's box.

June 8: Anna, Robert, and Emily have just spent the last two days with us. Robert is home on sick leave. He has just spent five weeks in the hospital and looks dreadful. He does not want to talk, only to eat and sleep. So congenial Anna is more quiet than ever before. All went fishing in the afternoon.

No late news from Brother Coley. Why does he not write? Now that he has been in two battles, he must be better satisfied. We are glad to see his company so highly spoken of. Must stop. They are calling us to go to church.

Evening. What a budget of news we heard there: "Poor Stokes," arrested at Knoxville as a spy and his appeal to his friends in Madison Parish to bear witness to his love of the South, the fight at Fort Pillow, the evacuation of Vicksburg, the occupation of Memphis, the defeat of our gunboats and the loss of seven out of nine, and the falling back of Beauregard from Corinth to Holly Springs.⁴⁰ What a long list of disasters. But there is some good news to offset it. Mrs. Dancy sent out Friday's papers giving an account of the

³⁹ Kate is probably referring to the Battle of Fair Oaks or Seven Pines, May 31-June 1, 1862.

⁴⁰ Port Pillow, Tenn., June 4; Memphis, Tenn., June 6, 1862. The gunboats referred to were lost in the naval battle for Memphis. The report about Vicksburg being lost was, of course, unfounded. Beauregard retired to Tupelo, not Holly Springs.

victory at Chickahominy after a two-day fight, capturing camp, breastworks, and ten guns. Stonewall Jackson has crossed the Potomac, whipped Banks' army, and ten thousand Marylanders have flocked to his standard. Again, a rumor that France and Spain have recognized the Confederacy. We are hoping the bad news is all false and the good all true.

Julia and I wrote all the news off in telegraphic style and sent it over to Mr. Valentine by the messenger who carried over a palmetto hat ⁴¹ and some books sent by Mamma.

June 9: The men had another meeting at Goodrich's today, and as usual they did a great deal of talking and nothing else.

We went fishing and came back with nice strings of perch. We found Mrs. Carson and Katie being entertained by Mamma. They stayed until one. Their first visit for three months. Mrs. Carson was evidently miffed about something. We did not know what. Mr. Stenckrath perhaps made mischief. But she seems all right now. So let it pass, no time for neighborhood rows. Not a word from Kate since I left Vicksburg.

June 11: Mamma, Julia, and I went out to Mrs. Savage's today, and when at the Ballard gate Uncle Tom let go the reins to shut it the mules set off at a gallop. They ran about a mile and, crossing the bayou bridge safely, swerved to one side, and dashed into the woods. But they were soon brought up by going one on each side of a tree with no worse injury to the carriage than the breaking of the pole. I had jumped out just as we turned into the woods, compelled by Mamma's hand, and landed just in the midst of a thorn bush, a little scratched and torn. Mamma was in the carriage and was all right, except for the fright. We hurried back to see how Julia had fared, for she had obeyed Mamma and jumped out soon after the mules started to run. We found her about

⁴¹ Because of shortage of materials, hats for both men and women were made of many kinds of grasses and straw, palmetto being the most popular. When palmetto was not available, hats were made of wheat, oat, and rye straw.

half a mile away trudging to find us, thinking maybe we had been killed, with Uncle Tom not far behind hurrying to get to us. Julia was quite used up. She had fallen flat in the dust, broken her comb, lost her hair pins, torn her dress, and was quite badly bruised and shaken. Uncle Tom patched up the pole and we were so glad to escape so easily that we got in the carriage and went on to pay our visit. But Julia is sore and tired tonight. Mamma always gets so frightened when the horses run away and always tries to get everybody to jump out while she waits until all are out to jump and save herself. My idea is that it is much safer to stay in and I always try to hold Mamma in.

We found Mrs. Savage in all the hurry of packing up. Dr. Lily and Robert have at last persuaded her to leave the river and go out to Bayou Macon until the war is over, for fear of the Yankees raiding the places when they come down the river. Mrs. Savage and the other ladies are much opposed to leaving home, but they have been over-persuaded.

Her garden is lovely now. How Mrs. Savage will miss her flowers when she is far away. Robert is improving rapidly and shall soon rejoin his command.

We still hold Vicksburg and will hold on as long as it is possible. Mr. Selser is just from there. He saw Brother Coley, who keeps well. Much dissatisfaction in the company. We hear that another grand battle has been fought near Richmond, resulting in the defeat of McClellan. Oh! that it may be true.

Both Uncle Bo and My Brother must have been in it. Mamma just received a letter from them dated in April.

Yankee gunboats are looked for tomorrow or next day.

June 13: We got a paper with the latest news—Stonewall Jackson's successes in Maryland and his defeat of Shields and Fremont. The news is most encouraging, but we listen with trembling hearts for fear he may be surrounded and cut off there in the enemy's country.

Julia was so hurt by her runaway adventure that she could not get up until afternoon. Joe Carson came in the evening and stayed long enough after breakfast for me to beat him

two games of chess. Mrs. Alexander and Lou came to take Julia to spend the day, and just as she was ready to go here came pacing up Mr. McGee and Mr. McNeely to spend the "live-long day." In a few minutes Brother Walter and Duncan Gustine came in from the Bend. Brother Walter has been riding around nearly every day ostensibly hunting, but we think he is trying to organize a secret guerrilla company to harass the enemy should they land troops near here. He, Duncan, and Ben Clarkson went down to see Charley Scott this evening—to go hunting they said.

June 17: Well, today we will spend quietly at home as Julia is in bed, trying to ward off a chill. She had one coming from church Sunday.

Yesterday we spent at Dr. Carson's. One of the hottest days possible. Gen. Breckinridge was in the neighborhood and was expected to dinner, but much to our regret did not come.⁴² We all wished to meet him. We have not yet seen a major general and he is said to be exceedingly handsome. Mrs. Carson is much depressed, worrying all the time about Joe's going to the army. She will not let him get off. Joe, Mr. Baker, and Mr. McNeely made themselves very agreeable. We had a charming time in the grand old garden. Mrs. Buckner and her three children came in the afternoon. How she does admire her husband, who is now a Major.

Saturday Julia, Sister, Johnny, and I rode down on horseback to call on Mrs. Maher and coming back stopped with Mrs. Graves until evening—excessively warm. Theresa and Lamartine Graves came back with us and stayed until next evening. All went riding, but it was too warm and dusty for pleasure. Brother Walter has gone to Vicksburg to spend a week with Brother Coley. He went on an old flatboat as the road is still impassable. We sent a hat to Brother Coley and one for Col. Ferguson but they may be sights by the time the owners get them, as Brother Walter is not the most

⁴² John C. Breckinridge, onetime Vice-President of the United States, and a presidential candidate in 1860, entered the Confederate service as a brigadier general and soon was promoted to major general. He was at this time in command of troops in Mississippi.—*Biographical Directory of U. S. Congress.*

careful boy in the world. Yesterday and for several days the Bend has been crowded with soldiers going from the army at Corinth to Little Rock [Ark.]. Some of them the river planters send on in wagons but numbers of them walk.

Johnny and Jimmy have started to school again.

June 20: Good news from My Brother. We see from the last *Whig* that he is now Adjutant of the 2nd Miss. Battalion. I am so glad. He ranks now as Captain. He is not ambitious for himself, but I am very ambitious for him. All my dreams of future glory for our name center in My Brother. God bless him.

June 21: Julia left us today after a much enjoyed visit of three weeks that have passed all too quickly. She is a charming guest, so gay and full of life and never, no never makes mischief. Mrs. Carson and Katie spent the morning and Joe the afternoon and evening. We amused him with chess and music. Sister enjoys having Katie with her, and Mamma and Mrs. Carson have pleasant chats together while Mrs. Carson's boys and ours are great friends.

One evening we all went fishing on Prairie Lake, through sloughs and the densest canebrakes. We could scarcely force the horses through the ugly banks to the lake, and there were more crayfish and snakes than we ever saw. Not many fish. But it was a new jaunt and we liked the excitement of the ride.

While Julia was here, we all went to spend one day at Mrs. Curry's and it passed very gaily with talking and laughing, sewing and plaiting hats. In the afternoon we ventured again to Prairie Lake—eight boys and four girls—and a merry time we had racing through the cane over logs and stump holes, dodging vines and fallen trees. So recklessly they rode, I feared someone would be hurt. Mr. Hazlett did pitch head foremost into my hat as he stopped to pick it up, but he was not hurt. And such a lot of splendid fish we brought home.

Julia, Mrs. Abe Curry, Sue Richards, and I and Mr. Haze-

litt, Duncan Gustine, Mr. Clarkson's boys, the two Mackeys, our two boys, and little How Curry were the party.

Rumors of a ninety-day armistice.

June 25: Well, we have at last seen what we have been looking for for weeks—the Yankee gunboats descending the river. The *Lancaster No. 3* led the way, followed by the ram *Monarch*.⁴³ We hope they will be the first to be sunk at Vicksburg. We shall watch for their names. They are polluting the waters of the grand old Mississippi. Monday when Mamma and I went out to Mr. Newman's to spend the day and stopped at Mrs. Savage's to get Anna, Mr. McGee came down and told us the gunboats were in sight at Goodrich's, and about 4 o'clock, while at dinner, one of the servants said they were coming around the bend. We all ran out on the gallery for our first sight of the enemy, and soon we saw one craft bearing rapidly down the river, dark, silent, and sinister. Very few men were in sight and no colors were flying. There were no demonstrations on either side, but oh, how we hated her deep down in our hearts, not the less that we were powerless to do any harm. Soon three others came gliding noiselessly by, and we could have seen every boat and all the men sunk to the bottom of the river without a pang of regret. One transport was crowded with men. It looked black with them, and they had the impudence to wave at us. We would have been glad to return the compliment with a shot from a battery crashing right into the boat. One passed, then turned, and rounded into the hole just in front of the house, blowing the whistle.

We were certain she was going to land, and since the house is just at the river, a scene of excitement ensued. The gentlemen insisted we should leave the house and hide somewhere until the carriage could be hitched up for us to flee to the back country. We rushed around the house, each person picking up any valuable in the way of silver, jewelry,

⁴³ After the fall of the river forts north of Memphis and then the fall of Memphis itself, the Mississippi was open to the Federal fleet all the way down to Vicksburg. These boats were waiting for Admiral Farragut's fleet to come up from below Vicksburg.

or fancy things he could find, and away we ran through the hot, dusty quarter lot, making for the only refuge we could see, the tall, thick cornfield just beyond the fence. Two soldiers who were taking dinner with us were hurried ahead, as we knew they would be captured if recognized. Just as we were in full retreat, a motley crew—soldiers, women, children, and all the servants, in full view of the boat—we could see the spyglasses levelled at us. Some one called for us to come back. It was a feint. The gunboat was not landing. So we turned back to the house, a hot excited lot of people, and the dinner cold on the table.

The boats ran up and down for awhile and then anchored for the night at the foot of the Island.⁴⁴ A boat came ashore with three men and they had quite a conversation with some of our fireside braves assembled to see the sights. The Yankees, one a Col. Elliott,⁴⁵ were in full uniform and armed *cap-a-pie*. Some of the men, notably Mr. Newman and Mr. Hannah, answered all their questions, told them all they knew, and then tried to buy provisions from the boats, telling the officers they were nearly starving. It was an awful story for the country is filled with every eatable that could be raised. Mr. Cox acted like a man of proper spirit and denied what the other men had said about starvation.

The two Newman girls and Robert Norris came out home with us to await developments. Robert has fever and the mumps, and while Mamma hates dreadfully for the disease to get on the place, she could not let Robert, a soldier, run the risk of being captured out on the river. And so she invited him to stay with us. There were five of the boats, one at Goodrich's, two about Omega, and two others have gone farther down the river.

June 26: Mrs. Savage and Emily came out this morning

⁴⁴ The island mentioned here is Island No. 103, or what was then known as My Wife's Island. It was located near to the Madison Parish side of the river a few miles north of Vicksburg.

⁴⁵ Probably Colonel Alfred W. Ellet, commander of the *Monarch*. Altogether there were six Ellets, brothers, father and son, and nephews, connected with the Federal rams.—Gosnell, *Guns on the Western Waters*, 92-93.

to breakfast, and as she thought there was no further danger, she took Robert home with her. The Yankee officers said they came ashore to "assure the inhabitants that they meditated no injury." They had seen some ladies very much frightened and they regretted it, as the ladies were in no danger and would not be molested in any way. Annie and Lizzie Newman spent today with Mrs. Hardison and tonight at Mrs. Curry's, returning here in the morning. We are so anxious about Brother Walter. We cannot see how he can get home.

June 27: Brother Walter is safe at home again. He got back last night looking as brown and weather-beaten as any soldier of them all and so tired and stiff that he can hardly walk. He crossed the river in a skiff and walked all the way from Vicksburg to Willow Bayou in one day, following the railroad track. Mrs. Morris sent him on the next day on horseback, and we were delighted when he rode up. Brother Coley is well and in high spirits. Aunt Laura and Beverly are in Jackson. Brother Walter would have remained over for the fight at Vicksburg, but the battle on land is not expected to come off for some weeks yet. So he very wisely came home.

Lizzie and Annie Newman went home this morning. I hope they enjoyed their visit. They seemed to find it pleasant as they did not want to go home for another week.

Joe Carson came out Wednesday afternoon. And Thursday, directly after an early breakfast, we started out to Prairie Lake fishing. We stopped at Mrs. Curry's for the Newman girls and we got not only them but Sue and Miss Bledsoe as well. We stayed until eleven and had a lovely time. It was so pleasant in the woods—fragrant wild grape blossoms, a delightful breeze, and a deep blue sky with drifting clouds of snow. The finest fish were biting just fast enough to make it interesting without being tiresome. It was a gay company and the horses seemed to enjoy the ride as much as the riders. Lizzie came home with us. The girls go home in the morning.

Col. Ferguson's hat was a flat failure—too small. Brother Coley's was just right.

Dr. Buckner is indeed a friend in need. He sent Mamma, by Brother Walter, several hundred dollars to buy supplies. A most kind and generous action that we all appreciate. Money is so hard to raise these days and this will last some time.

June 29: Brother Walter brought a letter from My Brother to Mamma. It was sent by Tom Manlove, who is at home on sick leave. In the letter he is despondent and homesick and very anxious about us all now that the enemy is at our very doors. He says that it will kill him to remain idle in Virginia when we are in such danger and that he must come back to see about us and fight with the Mississippi army. He seems so desperate. We fear he will do something rash and get into trouble. He cannot realize that we are safe enough for the present.

We hear today that the Yankees are impressing all the Negro men on the river places and putting them to work on a ditch which they are cutting across the point opposite Vicksburg above DeSoto. They hope to turn the river through there and to leave Vicksburg high and dry, ruining that town and enabling the gunboats to pass down the river without running the gauntlet of the batteries at Vicksburg.⁴⁶ They have lately come up as far as Omega, four miles from us, taking the men from Mr. Noland's place down. We hear several have been shot attempting to escape. We were satisfied there would soon be outrages committed on private property. Mamma had all the men on the place called up, and she told them if the Yankees came on the place each Negro must take care of himself and run away and hide. We think they will.

From a late paper we see that Butler is putting his foot

⁴⁶ General Thomas Williams' brigade landed on the Louisiana side of the river opposite Vicksburg on June 25, 1862, and collected about 1,200 Negroes from the neighboring plantations to dig a canal across the mile-wide peninsula created by a hairpin turn in the Mississippi—F. V. Greene, *The Mississippi* (New York, 1909), 21-23.

down more firmly every day. A late proclamation orders every man in the city to take the oath of allegiance. There will be the most severe penalties in case of refusal. Butler had Mr. Mumford, a gentleman of New Orleans, shot for tearing down the first flag hoisted in New Orleans over the mint. The most infamous order and murder of which only Butler is capable. Is the soul of Nero reincarnated in the form of Butler? Why can he not fall of the scourge of New Orleans, yellow fever?

Gen. Breckinridge started to Vicksburg yesterday in a carriage, and he runs great risk of being captured, as they have pickets across the point.⁴⁷ Several of our soldiers have been taken trying to make their way across there. Brother Walter slipped through just in time.

The drought was broken last night by a good rain and the planters are feeling better. This insures a good corn crop and it was beginning to suffer. It is so essential to make good food crops this year. When we heard the cool drops splashing on the roof, "We thanked God and took fresh courage." Such a lovely morning. It is a pleasure to breathe the soft, cool air and look out over the glad, green fields, flashing and waving in the early sunlight.

Mamma had a chill and was in bed all day. How I dread to see her start again having fevers.

Martha, one of Courtney's twins, will die, they think tonight. The poor little creature has suffered a long time.

Mr. Catlin, Mrs. Bledsoe, and my pet aversion, Dr. Slicer, are amusing themselves during all this time of threatened ruin and disaster by getting up fish fries and picnics, aided and abetted by all that set back there calling themselves second-class—and they have named themselves truly.

Sister sent Douglas's hat over to him. Joe Carson's is nearly done, but only Mamma can finish it and she is sick.

June 30: The excitement is very great. The Yankees

⁴⁷ General Breckinridge was hastening to Vicksburg where he was to command troops. The Confederates expected a land attack after the successful running of the batteries on June 27-28 by Farragut's fleet.—"The Defense of Vicksburg," *Battles and Leaders*, III, 483-84.

have taken the Negroes off all the places below Omega, the Negroes generally going most willingly, being promised their freedom by the vandals. The officers coolly go on the places, take the plantation books, and call off the names of all the men they want, carrying them off from their masters without a word of apology. They laugh at the idea of payment and say of course they will never send them back. A good many planters are leaving the river and many are sending their Negroes to the back country. We hope to have ours in a place of greater safety by tomorrow.

Dr. Nutt and Mr. Mallett are said to be already on their way to Texas with the best of their hands. Jimmy and Joe went to the Bend and Richmond today. They saw Julia and Mary Gustine, who sent me word that I was a great coward to run away. Mary had talked to a squad of Yankee soldiers for awhile and found them anything but agreeable.

All on this place, Negroes and whites, are much wrought up. Of course the Negroes do not want to go, and our fear is when the Yankees come and find them gone they will burn the buildings in revenge. They are capable of any horror. We look forward to their raid with great dread. Mrs. Savage sent for her silver today. We have been keeping it since the gunboats came. They will all leave in two days for Bayou Macon. Would like to see them before they get off.

Mamma has been in bed all day. Sister is suffering with a large rising on her leg and Brother Walter from a severe cold. He is spitting blood, all yesterday and today, and tomorrow is compelled to go on a long trip. We have been arranging everything for an early start.

July 5: Another Fourth of July has gone by without any festivities, not even a dinner for the Negroes, but they have holiday. The Yankees told Mr. McRae, while they were holding him prisoner, that they would celebrate the day by a furious attack on Vicksburg. But we have heard few guns since the third. That day we heard them very distinctly, almost a continuous roar. It was said both mortar fleets were firing on Vicksburg. We have not heard the result.

The Yankees are gathering in the Negroes on the river

as fast as possible. They have taken all the men able to work from Lake Providence to Pecan Grove and from Omega to Baton Rouge. They are hourly expected at Pecan Grove. Robert is with us to be out of the way when they do come. He is nearly well. The Negroes are eager to go, leaving wife and children and all for freedom promised them, but we hear they are being worked to death on the canal with no shelter at night and not much to eat.

There has been no attempt at resistance. Some of the plantations have been deserted by the owners, some of them burned by the Yankee bands, and some of them not molested. It depends on the temper of the officer in charge. If he feels malicious, he burns the premises. If a good-natured enemy, he takes what he wants and leaves the buildings standing. Most of them are malicious. Mamma will have the Negro men taken to the back country tomorrow, if she can get them to go. Generally when told to run away from the soldiers, they go right to them and I cannot say I blame them.

Mamma has been sick in bed since Sunday and is not yet able to be up all day. We sent for Dr. Devine first, and he gave her a dose of podophyllin that completely exhausted her, since she always suffers dreadfully with nausea, and that nearly killed her. So we sent for Dr. Dancy, and she is improving, but slowly.

Brother Walter went out to Monroe, eighty miles, and got back yesterday. He succeeded in buying enough molasses to last the place the year and some little necessities at enormous prices. The trading boats are coming down the river again with groceries at ridiculously low prices, but of course no patriot could think of buying from them. Mamma was able to sell her surplus corn and that helped her on wonderfully. She had such quantities of it. And we certainly will have eatables this year, judging from the looks of the great fields of corn, peas, and potatoes. Not much cotton planted.

Mamma so longed for ice while she was ill, but it was impossible to get it, while those wretches on the gunboats could even have ice cream if they wished it.

People going and coming all the week. Mrs. Carson kindly

brought Mamma a substitute for lemonade and some crackers. She was out twice.

It is hard for sick people to live on cornbread. We fortunately have a little flour, sent Mamma by Mr. Hardison as a specimen of some home-grown wheat. Joe has been out several times. The last time I was just finishing his hat. I gave it to him and it fitted beautifully. He was so pleased with the gift that it repaid me for the yards of plaiting. Joe is the only "stay-at-home" I would give anything to, but I know so well it is not his fault. Mr. Hornwasher came out with Mrs. Carson, his black eyes sparkling and dancing even more than usual. He still speaks of joining the army.

We hear rumors of a great battle in Virginia and the utter discomfiture of McClellan with Gen. Lee attacking him in front and Stonewall Jackson with 2,800 men in the rear. That was a "stonewall" McClellan found hard to climb. My Brother and Uncle Bo must both have been in the fight, but we have had no news from them for such a long time. It is heart-sickening.⁴⁸

July 6: Johnny and Mr. Hardison, just from the Bend, say the victory over McClellan is assured. We attacked and after a three-day fight utterly routed them, capturing most of the force. It is such good news that we can hardly believe it is true.

We are so anxious about My Brother. Any disaster to him would nearly kill Mamma in her weakened state. She loves him more than anything on earth, and he is to me the dearest person in the world, next to Mamma. Uncle Bo must have been in the battle, and we cannot hear how he has fared. Suspense is hard to bear.

Mr. and Mrs. Hardison and all the children were down this evening. Alice is going tomorrow to her brother's to live. We are sorry for the poor, desolate little thing.

July 7: Sister and I went this morning to Judge Byrnes'

⁴⁸ Kate had heard the first accounts of the Battle of Seven Days, which began on June 26. In this engagement the Confederates under R. E. Lee drove the Federal Army back from the approaches to Richmond, Va.

below the Bend to see Julia. Heard many rumors but nothing reliable and much about the Negroes and the Yankees. Saw several gunboats go by. The two-story house is just at the river, and they have an excellent view both up and down the river. By the way, it is named River View.

As we passed Omega, a gunboat had landed and a number of soldiers in the hateful blue uniform with shining guns and bristling bayonets were lounging on the levee.⁴⁹ We did not stop to look at them but drove by as rapidly as Webster could make the mules go (We have only one carriage horse now).

They say we are to have two Texas regiments over to protect us tomorrow. We certainly hope so, for we seem to be given up to the evil one now.

The suspense about our loved ones is hard to bear, but then not so bad as the certainty of evil would be.

July 8: This afternoon Jimmy and I rode over to see Mrs. Curry. She had heard a rumor of George Richards' death as coming from us and sent over this morning to find out what we knew, which was nothing. It was merely a rumor, but we thought it kinder to go over and explain. We were so sorry she had heard anything unless it had been a certainty one way or the other. We went on to ride. A lovely evening but how the thought of Ashburn with his bright face and cheery ways is intertwined with every summer pleasure. I never go to put on my habit that I do not fancy I hear his laughing voice at the door calling me to come on and his merry whistle echoing through the house—

*His place in all the pomp that fills
The circuit of the summer hills
Is that his grave is green—*

July 11: Wednesday, Lou Whitmore, a distant cousin of ours living near Lake Providence, came on a visit, the second

⁴⁹ After Farragut ran the batteries, he was joined by another fleet, which had come down from Memphis, and the combined fleets lay in the Mississippi between Vicksburg and the mouth of the Yazoo River.—Gosnell, *Guns on the Western Waters*, 102-103.

time we ever saw her, but Mamma had known her father years ago. She paid us a short visit when we first moved up here. She is rather pretty but is very shy and such a timid creature. Her mother has been dead for some years, and she lives alone with her father, who is now overseeing, a broken-down scion of a better family. He seems coarse and rough and she seems in terror of him. I think he has ruined himself drinking. She is to stay some weeks.

Several visitors Wednesday, among them Joe and Willy Carson. Mrs. Carson has at last given her consent for Joe to go and he is in the wildest spirits. He leaves on Monday to join Gen. Breckinridge at Vicksburg as volunteer aide. We can send letters by him and also Beverly's set of aprons, at last finished. They are pretty with such a lot of embroidery on them and made by my own hands. Mrs. Carson is quite resigned to Joe's going. She has a happy temperament and soon rallies from any trouble. We shall miss Joe greatly, but I am so glad he is going. It is his duty. He is as old as Brother Coley, about nineteen. He is to be a bold soldier boy and he is perfectly happy. He says he wishes nothing else in this world.

Thursday Anna and Robert spent one of the hottest days on record with us. They came to say farewell as they were to move out next day, bag and baggage, to Bayou Macon. But today Mrs. Savage told Mamma she just would not go. Come what may, she is going to stay at home. So she will have the pleasure or displeasure of moving back, Negroes, furniture, piano, everything. The one week they spent out on the Bayou seemed to have disgusted them, and all of them want to come back home and stay there.

The conscripts are being enrolled, so Mr. Hazelitt has given up his school and is hunting up a company to join.⁵⁰ So the boys have nothing to do but hunt and fish, and they keep us supplied with fish and game.

The last accounts are that McClellan lost 20,000 killed

⁵⁰ The first conscription law was passed by the Confederate Congress in April, 1862, taking into military service all able-bodied men between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five.—A. B. Moore, *Conscription and Conflict in the Confederacy* (New York, 1924), 12-26.

and wounded, 30,000 prisoners, and thirty miles of wagons. Pursuit is still continuing and prisoners being brought in. The Yankee army is completely demoralized. All this seems too stupendous to be the truth. No news yet for us. We are said to have lost 10,000 killed and wounded.⁵¹

July 13: We bade Joe and Robert good-bye today at church. I was sorry to see Joe go. He is such a nice boy. And I think we both looked through tears when we shook hands, maybe for the last time.

McClellan was not captured. He is receiving heavy reinforcements and entrenching where he is. The Yankees visited Mr. Newman's on Friday and carried away everything they fancied.

Charley Scott and Allen Bridges took dinner here today. They came to see Brother Walter about joining a company.

July 15: Continuous and heavy cannonading all day in the direction of Vicksburg ceased soon after dark.

We have the finest melons and in this excessively hot weather they are a luxury. Lou Whitmore brought down for me a beautiful guitar, given her by her father. She does not play and insists on my keeping it, but neither do I. She is the most generous girl. She wants to give away everything, even her clothes, and when do we know we are going to get any more?

Brother Walter and Jimmy have been riding for several days helping to raise partisan bands for home protection.

July 18: Mamma has been unwell for several days and is quite ill today. We sent for Dr. Dancy and after looking him up all day found him half tipsy, following Mr. Williams around. As an excuse, he sent word he had a pressing engagement and recommended Dr. *Slicer*. And I just feel he is an ignoramus and disagreeable to boot. Mrs. McRae is very kind and comes frequently, though she is suffering torture with earache.

Still nothing from Virginia. We are anxious for Mr. Curry

⁵¹ Again Kate is referring to the Battle of Seven Days. The newspaper account is somewhat exaggerated.

to get back but dread it. He will have definite news. The ram *Arkansas* has done good work at Vicksburg. It sank several boats and disabled others.⁵²

A good many cases of sickness are on the place, and Sister has been complaining for two weeks. She suffers with her head. Mr. Hardison was telling us of Mrs. Abe Curry's trip on horseback to Floyd.⁵³ She must be crazy.

July 21: Oh, this long, cruel suspense. No news yet. Surely, if they were both alive, they would have communicated with us by this time. Every day adds to my conviction that My Brother is desperately hurt. I cannot think of him as dead. We see in one of the last papers that his brigade suffered terribly—nearly all of the field officers disabled, and My Brother's Colonel, John G. Taylor, whom he loved so much, among the killed. We are relieved about Uncle Bo. His regiment did not suffer greatly. We have seen the list of killed and wounded and his name is not there. We are thankful for his escape. But my heart leaps to my lips and I turn sick with apprehension whenever I hear a quick step, see a stranger approaching, or note a grave look on the face of any of the boys coming in from a ride. And I must conceal it all for Mamma's sake. She has been very ill since my last writing but is better tonight. We have been sitting up with her for two nights. She is in the east room and I am occupying hers for the time. We did not let her see the report of My Brother's brigade. If there is trouble, she can bear it better when she regains her strength. She noticed the torn

⁵² The *Arkansas*, begun in Memphis in the winter of 1861-62, was brought to Yazoo City, Miss., for completion in the spring of 1862. Commissioned in July, the *Arkansas* on July 15 engaged the Federal *Carondelet*, *Tyler*, and *Queen of the West* in the Yazoo River, near the Mississippi, successfully fought off the Federal fleet, and reached Vicksburg, where it was exposed to enemy fire continuously until the Federal fleet withdrew up the river about ten days later. Shortly thereafter, the *Arkansas* was destroyed near Baton Rouge to prevent capture by the *Essex*.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 572-79; Gosnell, *Guns on the Western Waters*, 101-35.

⁵³ A round trip of approximately fifty miles. Floyd was at the time the parish seat of Carroll Parish.

place in the newspaper and I had to tell a story to account for it. I pray the Recording Angel may mercifully blot it out.

Brother Coley's company is now at Skipwith's Landing with one other company to support a battery planted there. Wish the authorities would send them to this side of the river.

The man has just returned from Dr. Carson's with a wagonload of fruit. Everybody in the house is asleep, but, oh, as it is, I shall eat some of those lovely blue figs shining up through the leaves covering the basket. How the boys would enjoy them if I would wake them up, but morning is a better time for them to devour them.

July 24: Good news! Good news! We thank God who has preserved our loved ones unhurt through the fire of battle after battle. The news came today in a letter from Mrs. Narcisse Johnson at Lake Washington to Mamma telling her that Brother Coley had passed there on his way to camp at Greenville [Miss.]. He asked her to write to Mamma and to say that he had heard of My Brother since the battles and he escaped unhurt. Truly God has been merciful to us all. It was kind of Mrs. Johnson to write. We know her very slightly.

Mamma had grown so anxious that Brother Walter started to Vicksburg at daybreak this morning to get news. He will go all the way in a canoe, paddling himself. Truly navigation on the Mississippi is returning to the customs of the aborigines. Mamma is still in bed and improves very slowly. Company every day this week, but I am thankful to say none to spend the day. A note from Julia saying she and her mother will come out Saturday if we can send the carriage.

A partisan band camped at the schoolhouse last evening and Lou and Sister, returning from Mrs. Curry's, saw them. They said they would be back this evening. Johnny and I walked out to see, but ne'er a soldier was in sight, only several Negroes returning from their Yankee pleasure trip, weary and footsore and eager to get home. Numbers of them pass here going home, bending their necks to the yoke again, preferring the old allegiance to the new. But numbers are

still running to the gunboats. We would not be surprised to hear that all of ours have left in a body any day.

I wrote to Brother Coley by Mrs. Johnson's servant, and he will get the letter in a few days. I feel so relieved and lighthearted after those weeks of suspense, I could do any foolish thing. If only Mamma were quite well again.

Aug. 5: I have had my bed moved to the window; and looking out tonight on the pale moonlight, the far off, misty stars, and the light, fleecy clouds scudding across the sky, the shadows of the tall trees, ghostlike on the grass, I am very happy for my darling Brother has been mentioned for distinguished gallantry in the late battles. We are not surprised for we know him, but it is grateful to have others appreciate him. My Brother in his last letter of July 2 says nothing of himself but that he was ill from fatigue but would rejoin his regiment and go into the fight the next day. The paper did not say and we will never know any particulars.

The Yankees have called off their gunboats and quit the river in disgust.⁵⁴ Sometimes now we can get the papers.

Nearly everybody in the country sent us word of My Brother's safety. So many papers and messages. All knew how anxious Mamma and all of us had been. Brother Walter did not learn much by his hard trip to Vicksburg, only a confirmation that all was well with them, and he got back safely from a perilous trip canoeing down the river. I wonder that we could have sent him on such a quest so dangerous.

The house has been full of company for ten days. At first only Mrs. Payne and Julia with transient visitors, but later Mary Gustine, Missie Morris, callers most of the time, and others to spend the night, the two Lowry boys among the others. Mamma remained ill during the first few days and Mrs. Payne took her place in bed the last few days of the visit. But taken altogether we had a pleasant time. Missie is

⁵⁴ According to Gosnell, the move was made because of sickness among the Federal forces. "The gunboat fleet," he says, "had 40 per cent sick on July 25; and the small army had *only 25 per cent fit for duty.*" By July 27 both the upper and lower fleets had gone and Vicksburg was freed from the presence of a hostile fleet—Gosnell, *Guns on the Western Waters*, 131.

looking better than I ever saw her but is discontented and unhappy. Mary is not as handsome as usual but is more talkative, and Julia is the same gay, carefree soul as ever. We girls called on Mrs. Savage one afternoon and found her in bed, where she had been for some days. Anna also was sick. We four had a lovely time at Mrs. Carson's Saturday with chess, music, singing, gossip, and fruit. I can still beat Missie at chess. It is an effort but I can do it. Joe had just returned home. He did not like his position on the staff so resigned and tomorrow goes to Greenville to join Dr. Buckner's company. We are glad he and Brother Coley will be together. He came out Saturday evening and stayed until after twelve. Both the Mr. Lowrys were here and all the girls, making quite a houseful. At half past eleven how sleepy most of the crowd were, but the boys would not go along home.

Mr. Curry, who is in very bad health, goes on to Tupelo [Miss.] tomorrow to see his son Abe, and we have been busy writing letters to send by him. Mrs. Carson and Mrs. Buckner called and we received the letter telling of My Brother's gallantry soon after they came. And of course it had to be read to them. Everybody seems glad to hear a good account of him.

The road to Vicksburg is open again. Mr. McRae has been there and returned.

Aug. 19: The excitement of the last two days has been the entirely unexpected reappearance of the Yankees on the river. They came upon us like a thief in the night. The entire Yankee fleet was at Milliken's Bend ready for a fight before anyone on the river knew they had left Memphis. It does not seem possible for thirty-nine boats to pass five hundred miles down the river without being discovered, but such was almost literally the case. The people of Lake Providence did not know until the next day that a fleet had passed by them. And at Vicksburg all were resting in perfect security, thinking the enemy far away, until Capt. White hurried into the city and told them the boats would soon be there. He put spurs to his horse as soon as the first boats

reached the Bend and made all possible haste to reach Vicksburg. Fortunately, he roused them in time, and the little city will hold out as long as possible.

The surprise at the Bend was complete. The *Fair Play* was at the landing loaded with arms and passengers. All were captured.⁵⁵ And the 31st La. Regt. was camped there and had only time to seize their arms—and run away. The Yankees followed as far as Tallulah and there burned the depot and cars and tore up the track, returning to the Bend in time to steal anything they wanted. At dusk they went on board their boat and rejoined the fleet at Vicksburg. We heard such startling accounts that Mamma at once sent off the Negro men with Jimmy to take care of them to Bayou Macon, but tonight as all present fear is allayed, she sends for them again.

It was a time to be scared last night, and I, for one, did feel frightened with Mr. McRae, Brother Walter, and Jimmy all away and Johnny the only man (he is twelve) about the place. We have heard such horrible stories of the outrages of the Yankees and Negroes that it is an anxious time for only women and children. Mr. Al Lowry was here until nine. He stopped in on his way back to his company. He was satisfied I would not sleep a wink, but at sleepy time, as there was no way to escape the inevitable, we all went to bed and slept soundly until the safe morning hours. Mamma is not at all well. . . .

We had slight hopes that My Brother would be sent home as recruiting officer for his regiment to fill it out from the conscript camps. He wished to get the appointment.

We poor dwellers on this side of the river are not to be left entirely to the mercy of the enemy. The cry of distress from the river has roused the back country, and they report 3,000 men crossing the Macon today. So we will have a little army of our own something nearer than fifty miles. There

⁵⁵ The Federal fleet, accompanied by a detachment of troops, captured the Confederate transport *Fair Play*, heavily loaded with arms and ammunition, at Milliken's Bend, August 18. The gunboats then sailed up the Yazoo and Sunflower rivers destroying and capturing a great amount of military supplies.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 558.

are so many contradictory reports about the gunboats that we know not what to believe. There may be ten or forty before Vicksburg.

The Negroes enjoyed their hasty trip to Bayou Macon. It will give them something to talk of for a long time.

The last Yankee raid has quite decided Mrs. Savage, and they will go to the Macon Saturday, determined to remain until the war is over. They are awfully afraid of the Yankees. Four of her Negroes ran away today rather than be moved back. It is a plentiful, pleasant home to give up to destruction. I was out there a week recently nursing Anna and found it such a comfortable, abundant place. They had better hold it as long as possible. Mrs. Savage has been many years improving it.

Am reading Bulwer's novels. Nothing but the old standbys to read. Visitors nearly every day. Mr. Stockton has been out twice this week. He is a pleasant gentleman. He is teaching at Mr. Neily's. He is well read and well informed. He is sweet tempered, gay, and curly headed, light curls. He has Philadelphia ideas and old Virginia notions that grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength.

Mr. Valentine was over yesterday. He has joined his brother-in-law's company, Capt. Harper's, and is very cheerful and agreeable. He has the pleasant consciousness of duty done and can hold up his head with other men. Mr. Catlin has also joined that company. The fear of conscription has forced them in. Still, better late than never. I know Mr. Valentine would have gone long ago but for his father's persuasions. But Mr. Catlin—nothing but necessity could start him.

Aug. 25: The strife and din of war is coming fearfully near us now. Tonight just as we were sitting down to tea, we heard the boom of cannon with the rattling report of small arms. Seemed so near. It continued about fifteen minutes and we think it must have been at Omega or the Bend. It excited and startled us, but now we are only anxious to know whether it was a skirmish.

There are now quite a number of troops on this side of

the river and in a few days there will be many more with Gen. Blanchard at their head. And the Yankees will not be so free to land and seize whatever they choose. We hear that Gen. Blanchard has ordered all the women and children living in his district to leave the river as it is no longer safe for them, and he will dispute the landing of the foe at every point.⁵⁶ The planters generally are moving back to the hills as fast as possible. There are two families refugeeing in our neighborhood. Mrs. Payne and Julia are at Hardison's and Mrs. Newton's family are at Mr. Curry's. Dr. Carson has gone to look for a place for himself, and Mamma asked him to notice for one suitable for her. Several from that section have already gone.

We should not mind our individual reverses on this side of the river when we hear how gloriously our arms are triumphing everywhere else. Our entire line is said to be advancing, and we read of a succession of small victories.

Brother Walter returned Saturday. He had been gone more than a week. Brother Coley is well again and with his regiment. He had been very ill, and like a foolish boy he refused to go to any private home to be nursed or take medicine until Mrs. Blanton, hearing of his sickness, sent him word she was not a stranger but a friend of his mother's and he must come to her home. He went and she soon nursed him back to health. He was quite sick when his regiment engaged the gunboats but insisted on going into action. Like the high spirited, reckless boy "spoiling for a fight" he is, he stood up in one of the rifle pits firing until he grew so ill he had to be carried out. He recovered a little and returned to his post, and when his company was ordered to march he had just strength enough to drag himself to a tree, where he was found nearly insensible by the men who had been sent out to seek him. He is of a nervous temperament

⁵⁶ General Albert G. Blanchard had been assigned to command the Confederate camps of instruction, with headquarters in Monroe, La.—U. S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion; A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1880–1901), Ser. I, XV, 760. Hereafter this work will be cited as *Official Records*.

and suffers so when he is sick that it required heroism to hold up his head and fight when suffering so much, as we know he was. He is a thin, delicate boy but with an indomitable spirit. He has never been strong since he was poisoned by his nurse when a little fellow. He was at Death's door then for weeks.

Dr. Buckner and Joe have both been sick and nursed at private houses. Brother Walter amused us telling of the fame of the hat sent to Col. Ferguson. He cannot wear it but will not give it to anyone who can. He carried it up there with him and has made such a boast of it that the hat and its history are widely known. Something I surely did not bargain for. But alas! Alas! The gallant Colonel is said to be desperately in love and *engaged* to Miss Kitty Lee, a Lake Washington girl, and an old playmate of mine when we were little people. He has been sick at her father's house for three weeks, and of course the natural consequence is he has fallen in love with the dark-eyed daughter.

Dr. Jim Smith sent me word please to make a hat for him. Did I not remember I was an old sweetheart of his? I distinctly remember he is an old detestation of mine.

Brother Coley is about out of clothes, and Walter went to Delhi today to try to get something for him. We can keep Brother Walter no longer. He is wild to be off so Mamma is having his clothes made. Charley Scott is waiting to go with him. It is late and I am frightened and sleepy.

Aug. 26: The firing last night is explained. Mr. Sebastian and several others fired at two gunboats passing Omega. The boats returned the compliment by shelling all the country around, but no damage was done. Mrs. Nutt was much frightened and went to Mrs. Neily's for the night.

Al and Frank Lowry spent several days with us last week. Today we have had a houseful. Early this morning Mamma, Sister, and I rode over to Mrs. Curry's. Her house is crowded and she has two very sick soldiers there. On our return we found Charley Scott and Allen Bridges here to discuss getting off with Brother Walter. Soon after, Mr. Valentine walked in, then Mr. Stockton and Duncan Gustine, and, after dinner,

old Mr. Valentine and Al Lowry. He is still here. We had an idea of making calls this afternoon ourselves but the "best laid plans. . . ." The morning was pleasant, but entertaining all a long August day and far into the night is wearying. I know Mamma is tired. Mary and Huldah Curry are here tonight. They are Sister's company and she does the entertaining. We sent long letters to My Brother today by the mail rider.

Mr. Stockton is just up from Vicksburg and reports all the citizens back at home. I wish we could go down for a few days. They are expecting the transports with our prisoners aboard to be exchanged. Should so like to see their arrival.

Aug. 29: The spirit of discontent is moving in my heart tonight. Gloomy thoughts will arise. Could I only be content to watch the Future as it unfolds instead of trying to pierce its mystery and mold it to my will, how much happier I would be. But as that is beyond my strength, I can only struggle against the evil spirit and exorcise it as best I may.

Mamma and I spent Wednesday with Mrs. Savage and Mrs. Carson. Both houses are in the greatest confusion, everything being pulled to pieces and packed up. Mrs. Savage and family left today. Mrs. Carson will go in a few days. It will be long, I fear, before we, all of us, spend another day together. Met Miss Bettie Carter and Mrs. Buckner. She and I made a half-arrangement to go to Vicksburg together next week. Col. Buckner is there or near. Julia came down and spent the night. Next morning we, with Johnny, took a long ride through the woods, the wildest, loneliest part of the swamp. Brought home lots of muscadines. Got in at ten and had just time to dress and get cool when Dr. Slicer was announced, we thought for a short morning call, but we soon discovered to our horror that his intention was to spend the live-long, long day. We survived through it as best we could, and about four he ordered his horse. We ordered the carriage and went to call on Mrs. Graves. They are strong partisans of Col. Morrison's. Saw Mrs. Bell, her sister, and think poorly of her. We stopped

a minute to see Mrs. Hardison and her little new son. Met there Mrs. and Miss Nutt waiting for the gunboats to pass down the river. Mrs. Nutt is not yet over the fright of the shelling at Omega.

Dr. Slicer is decidedly one of my antipathies and I shall not go to ride with him. Why has he taken to coming here? I know he started the report that I would not speak to any man who was not a soldier and various like reports that Mr. Valentine and Mr. Stockton told me about.

Julia and Jimmy went to Mrs. Morris's by break of day. Addie Curry is quite sick and Julia will offer to help nurse her. All the family except Son and Addie have moved to Homer [La.].

The last gunboat went up the river today but may return at once.

Sept. 23: Three weeks of silence spent mostly in Vicksburg, a dull profitless visit. Nothing going on there and I was glad to get home as quiet as it now is and will be, I suppose, until the close of the war. So many friends are gone, but judging from our many recent victories the close may be near. We will conquer a peace.

The victories of Manassas and Richmond, Ky., were both won on the same day. Harper's Ferry, Frederick [Md.], Kanawha Valley, and Iuka [Miss.], and various small successes, all within thirty days, make us very hopeful.⁵⁷

Mrs. William H. Johnstone was staying with Aunt Laura, and Dr. Buckner came after a few days with a furlough for thirty days, his first for several months. All of them were so quiet. Aunt Laura was happy just to sit and look at Dr. Buckner, Mrs. Johnstone had little to say, and Dr. Buckner rarely talks at any time and this was not one of the times. I longed for home—it was so deadly dull—but I could not get away. Most of our acquaintances are still out of town, and though the streets were crowded with soldiers I knew none of

⁵⁷ Bull Run (Second Manassas), Va., August 30; Richmond, Ky., August 30; Frederick, Md., September 12; Harper's Ferry, Va., September 12-15; and Iuka, Miss., September 19-20, 1862.

them. The old familiar faces are away fighting in Virginia and Tennessee and strangers are defending their city.

Our exchanged prisoners to the number of 1,500 arrived while I was there, and the place was crowded with them.⁵⁸ There were no adequate preparations to provide for them, and many of them had to beg the citizens for something to eat. So happy as they all looked, as merry and free as uncaged birds, and all eager to begin the fight again. The ladies of Memphis gave them a heartfelt and enthusiastic welcome, kisses as plentiful as blackberries, but there was nothing of that kind in Vicksburg. Met a Lt. Polk of Tennessee, who gave an interesting and anecdotal account of his imprisonment. Aunt Laura and Mrs. Johnstone spent the summer at the Bowman House at Jackson and had many amusing experiences. Cousin Jenny and Titia were at Canton [Miss.]. Aunt Laura saw them and is expecting them on a visit. Looked for them all the time I was there. I wanted to see them so much.

Saw Mr. [Horace] Miller several times. He at last has a regiment, the 20th Miss. He was taken prisoner at Donelson.

Sept. 24: The first of the fall rains. How I dread this winter. I shudder in anticipation: The long rains, the impassable roads, no books, no papers, few letters, our friends nearly all away, and most of our loved ones in the army. Awful prospect. But thinking of it will make it no better and "to each day its burden."

Brother Walter goes on Monday to join Dr. Buckner's company in Bolivar County [Miss.] and all are busy preparing him for the start. The house will be desolate indeed when he is really gone, following in the perilous paths his brothers are treading before him. If he would only wait until he is eighteen or until there is another requisition for troops, but "No, no, he cannot wait. The war might be over before he gets there, and he would feel disgraced forever if he had not

⁵⁸ Both sides were accumulating great numbers of prisoners; consequently an arrangement had been made in July, 1862, to exchange prisoners on an even basis. Surplus prisoners were released under parole, provided they would not again take up arms.

fought in the good Cause." So runs his logic. There are so many victories he fears even now peace may be proclaimed before he is enrolled as a soldier fighting with his brothers. Monday there were assembled here Charley Scott, Polk Bass, Ben Clarkson, and Brother Walter, all four boys leaving for the army in the next few days. Also Mrs. Carson, Mrs. McRae, Will Clarkson, and Theresa and Mollie Bass were here. Polk Bass is home on furlough. Charley Scott will go with him to Savannah to join the Madison Infantry. Ben Clarkson joins with Brother Walter.

Mamma is suffering much with her arm but is busy knitting socks for Brother Walter and Coley. I am knitting gloves as I can do it well and rapidly now. Nothing like sticking to a thing to learn it. We are again in suspense about My Brother. Had just had a letter written after Manassas just before they crossed the Potomac into Maryland. Now there is news of a hard-won victory at Frederick and his division hotly engaged, and that is all.

I heard while in Vicksburg of the death of a cousin, Ruby Davis. She died on the plantation on the Yazoo, leaving a baby a few days old. Only her mother was with her. Her husband, who is in the army, arrived just as they were lowering her body in the grave. They had been married only a year or so. Her people are in New Orleans. Another cousin too is dead. Elam Ragan is dead on the field of battle, falling shot through the heart just as he mounted one of the enemy's batteries shouting, "Hurrah! Come on, boys, it is ours." Peaceful be the rest of the gallant boyish heart that knew no fear. With him life's battle was soon over.

A letter from Mrs. Rossman tells of the death of her young brother, Eugene Selser, another boyish soldier offering up his life, a sacrifice to his country. Mrs. Rossman says she hears regularly from My Brother. I hope Eugenia does not.

Sept. 30: A telegram from My Brother to Mamma says he is slightly wounded in the leg, wounded in the battle of Sharpsburg, Md., one of the most hotly contested battles of the campaign. Tom Manlove was also slightly wounded in the arm in the same fight. If we do not hear soon again,

Brother Walter will go to Vicksburg for further news. Maybe now My Brother can come home to recuperate for a little while. He has been marching and fighting almost constantly since the first of July. Letters from Uncle Bo. He is in excellent health and spirits and his regiment has not been in any of the late battles. Brother Walter will not go to his company until we hear further from My Brother.

Sister has been quite sick for several days. Mrs. Carson, Anna, Miss Bettie, and the girls took dinner. Had a talkative, pleasant time. Mrs. Savage is back home again. She says now she will stay till driven off by Yankees or overflow.

Our usual round of visiting and visitors, now that Mrs. Carson and Mrs. Savage are back. We went to Mrs. Curry's to call on Mrs. Frank Blunt from Hinds County. She told us Aunt Rebeckah Jones, Ruby's mother, died on the plantation a few days after Ruby with only the servants and the doctor with her. All her life she had been so lapped around with love and care. Tragedy after tragedy.

Duncan Gustine came to say good-bye. He was to leave yesterday to join the Madison Infantry at Savannah. Julia has been here for several days. She looks wretched from sickness. Mr. Valentine has also been over. He is now 3rd lieutenant in Capt. Harper's company and is much pleased at his election.

Brother Walter saw both Cousin Titia and Jenny with Aunt Laura. Had I stayed a week longer I would have seen them. They have treated us really badly neither coming nor writing, and we so want to see them. Mamma said she missed me greatly and was so glad to get me home.

Today we actually had *cake*, a most rare occurrence, due to Mrs. Hardison's sending us a little homemade flour. But for them, we might forget the taste of wheaten bread, and Aunt Laura is using it lavishly at \$50 a barrel.

Oct. 1: The most important fact is Lincoln's proclamation freeing all slaves held by rebel masters after January 1.⁵⁹ I wonder what will be the result of this diabolical move.

⁵⁹ The reference is to Lincoln's preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, issued on September 22, 1862, to take effect January 1, 1863.

Surely not as bad for us as they intend it to be. I think there is little chance of a happy hereafter for President Lincoln. A thousand years of repentance would be but brief time to wipe out his sins against the South. How can he ever sleep with the shades of the thousands he has consigned to a bloody death darkening his soul?

Took two rides today, read some silly stories in *Gleason's Pictorial*⁶⁰ borrowed from Mrs. Fontaine, and entertained Mr. McGee during a lengthy call.

My Brother and Jimmy's birthday.

Oct. 2: We see from the *Whig* that Lt. Floyd was killed at Sharpsburg. My Brother, I know, is sorry. I saw him last spring in Vicksburg. My good wishes for his safe return were fruitless. He was desperately wounded in the battles before Richmond, but recovered only in time to march to meet his death in Maryland. In Kentucky some hearts are aching for him. He was a frank, pleasant comrade and friend.

There is great disappointment over Maryland. It was thought there would be a great uprising of the people as soon as the Stars and Bars should wave across the Potomac, but nothing of the kind. There has been but little enthusiasm and few recruits. Well, let the Old Bay State go, if her people had rather be slaves in the Union than masters in the Confederacy. They must abide by their choice.

The gunboats are expected down now any day to renew the attack on Vicksburg, but if we get Cincinnati and Louisville as we are threatening to do now, the gunboats will be needed in other waters.

Eliza, Courtney's other twin, died suddenly yesterday, the first death for some time. Brother Walter has been ill with cold. It is fortunate that he had not started off.

Oct. 3: My fingers have been busy with unaccustomed work today, the work of olden times, learning to weave. Mamma is having a loom made to weave cloth for the Negroes, and Jimmy and I are to make the "harness." Mr. Curry came over early this morning on purpose to teach us.

⁶⁰ A magazine published in Boston, beginning in 1859.

He said he knew I could soon learn it. To keep my reputation for aptness, I commenced work at once under his tutelage, and as it takes two to work it Jimmy learned also. Now we progress swimmingly, though it will take several days to finish it. It is like going back to the days of the Revolution to see the planters all setting up their looms and the ladies discussing the making of homespun dresses, the best dyes, and "cuts" of thread, though yet awhile I think a homespun dress would be more difficult to get than a silk. Silk of the poorest kind is now \$500 [?] a yard⁶¹ and walking shoes \$15 a pair and difficult to get at that. Everything has gone up in the same ratio. We expect to suffer for clothes this winter. We hear of a gentleman offering \$50 for a pair of boots and then waiting for weeks to get them made. Unless we capture some Northern city well stocked, there will soon be no dry goods in the Confederacy. The ladies are raising a cry for calicoes and silks that echoes from the Potomac to the Gulf.⁶²

Mrs. Newton and family have left Mrs. Curry's and are now keeping the tavern in Tallulah, and there are crowds of soldiers stopping there all the time.

Oct. 5: There will be no preaching until Mr. Holbury regains his health, and so we have been busy writing letters most of the day, some to Other Pa and Uncle Johnny, whom we have not heard from for months. The letters will go by Mr. Bass. Long ones to My Brother and Uncle Bo will be carried to Vicksburg by Mr. McRae when he carries his wife down tomorrow. She goes to Mississippi to remain with her people, but Mr. McRae will remain here. We send in the wagon a little sugar cane for Mrs. Johnson. She has never seen any.

Uncle Tom is in trouble today. He has succeeded in cheating a lot of the Negroes out of \$20 in a chicken trade, and they are anything but pleased.

⁶¹ The figure is not completely legible. New ladies' hats and bonnets usually sold for \$500.—Massey, *Ersatz in the Confederacy*, 96.

⁶² "Woman's fondness for fashionable clothes was never absent from the South during the war," says Miss Massey. "As one woman said, her love for new fashions and pretty clothes was merely 'scotched . . . not killed.'"—*Ibid.*, 92.

Am reading *The Pillar of Fire*⁶³ and like it exceedingly. Will keep it for Sunday reading.

Oct. 6: We were out to see Mrs. Carson and Mrs. Savage. They are expecting the Yankees all the time. Mrs. Carson feels that they are being imposed on by soldiers and travelers. She says they are nearly eaten out of house and home, and she gave us her bill of fare. It certainly is a great falling off from the past abundance. There are always five or six soldiers there. She still has flour for lightbread, but it is saved for the sick soldiers. They are exceedingly kind and helpful to all wearing the uniform. Mrs. Carson is going into raptures over Col. Pargoud.⁶⁴ He has large plantations near Monroe, is young and splendid looking, was educated in France, has elegant manners, and is a Colonel in full cavalry uniform, the finest to be had—ivory stirrups, silver trappings, and superb horses. What more could one have? May it be given to me to meet this paragon before some other girl *snatches* him up. Capt. Harper's company is in his regiment.

We saw the paper of the fourth. It advocates raising the Black Flag in retaliation for Lincoln's emancipation proclamation.

Such a war is too horrible to think of. We hear that My Brother is perfectly well and has never been wounded. Am reading *The Newcomes*⁶⁵ and like it very much in spite of Dr. Carson's prophesies to the contrary. He offers me a leather medal (as one of the most expensive materials now known to us) if I succeeded in reading it through. Dr. Carson does not like Thackeray. Strange too, as he is an inveterate novel reader. I was so surprised when I learned that Dr. Carson liked novels. He gives one the impression of far too much mind and thoughtfulness to care for light reading. When I meet a young man strongly resembling Dr. Carson,

⁶³ *The Pillar of Fire; or, Israel in Bondage* (1865) was the first of a trilogy of Biblical novels by Rev. Joseph Holt Ingraham.—*Library of Southern Literature*, VI, 2595.

⁶⁴ Probably J. Frank Pargoud, member of a prominent Ouachita Parish family.—Williamson, *Northeast Louisiana*, 142.

⁶⁵ A novel by William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63), published serially 1853-55.

I shall surely lose my heart to him. He is one of nature's noblemen.

Oct. 10: A letter from Uncle Bo dated a month back just as his division was crossing into Maryland. He writes jubilantly, so glad to be advancing into the enemy's country. The letter is filled with praise of My Brother. How fond and proud he is of "Will," and how unselfish. How dreadfully disappointed the army and officials are that Maryland did not rally to their support when once they were on her soil.

Now after all those bloody battles with no good result to follow, our whole army has recrossed the Potomac. Our defeat at Corinth is rumored. We are anxious for full particulars. Reinforcements from Vicksburg have been sent on.

Mrs. Carson came out with a package of letters just received from Joe. All were well then, and she and Mamma discussed Joe and Brother Coley's clothes to their satisfaction. Mrs. Payne is with us. Julia is still with Carrie Lowry.

Oct. 24: Mamma and I went down to Vicksburg ten days ago with Brother Walter to see him that far on his way to the war. We hoped also to see Brother Coley, having heard his regiment had been ordered to Vicksburg, but we were disappointed. The regiment marched through the county to Panola County. We do not know their destination.

We found Aunt Laura's house full, Aunt Sarah and the children there on a visit. Mamma and I were squeezed in, and Brother Walter and Ben Clarkson went to the hotel. Dr. Buckner was quite sick and the boys could not get off until Saturday. Suppose they got off that day. Mamma went home Wednesday and I left on Thursday for a visit to Annie Amis. While we were at dinner Tuesday, a message came to Aunt Laura from Mrs. Amis saying that the hotel was so crowded she could not get a room and would Aunt Laura take her in for a day or so. Aunt Laura looked "No," a great big "No," for her house was packed something like sardines in a box. But we begged her to take them in anyway. Mrs. Johnstone and I agreed to find a place to sleep. With that condition, she agreed and a message of welcome was sent

Mrs. Amis. After dinner, we went over to Mrs. Butt's house, next door, and prevailed on the woman in charge—the family are refugeeing—to let some of us occupy one of the rooms that night. She at last consented and Mrs. Johnstone and I spent the night there. Mrs. Amis never knew that two of Aunt Laura's guests had borrowed a sleeping place.

Mr. Templeton called that evening and stayed until eleven. I promised to knit a pair of gloves for him. I have about all on hand I can "do jestice to." Annie Amis has been teasing me about him ever since. Mrs. Amis begged me to pay them a visit, and as Annie and I had seen nothing of each other for so long, I decided to go home with them. Annie has been off at school for several years.

Mamma went home Wednesday alone in the carriage. That afternoon Aunt Sarah, Mrs. Johnstone, Annie, and I, accompanied by Brother Walter on horseback, took a ride, going out to Allen's gardens. We saw several batteries. Later we walked around to the jail to see the Yankee prisoners, who crowded around the gate watching the passersby. Thursday morning we had an exciting race after a Louisiana regiment of infantry. At last we caught up with them and had the pleasure of seeing them reviewed by Gen. Smith.

Mrs. Amis, Annie, and I crossed the river that evening on our way to Fortune's Fork, their home.⁶⁶ I bade Brother Walter and Ben good-bye on the ferry. Brother Walter was so distressed. My dear little brother, none of us thought he would feel so deeply about leaving home. He felt the parting more than either of the other boys. He could hardly speak to Mamma in all the time we were in Vicksburg without his voice quivering and his eyes filling with tears. It made us cry only to look at him. Poor little fellow, it is his first parting from home and going among strangers, and he feels so lonely and cutadrift from us all. May our Heavenly Father bless and keep him in the hours of danger and bring him safe home to us at last.

We reached Fortune's Fork by 3 o'clock. Such a splendid

⁶⁶ Fortune's Fork was on Roundaway Bayou a few miles below Richmond, La.

two-story house so complete in all its appointments and a tribe of well-drilled servants, headed by Aunt Rebeca and Lou and Uncle John. I spent a pleasant week, generally just Annie and I. She is a madcap and incessant talker and in for any kind of fun. We talked and read and drove out in the buggy with "Old Ball," sometimes twice a day, as fast as "Old Ball" could race. Annie was the driver and a most reckless one. I was sure we would come to grief some way, but thanks to the good roads and an over-looking Providence we escaped. In the character of soldiers seeking a night's lodging we were quite successful. It was a time of wild nonsense and idleness. There was not a man anywhere around. All in the army but Mr. Lucas, a widower, who lives on the next place, but we only saw him once. I fancy he is not much of a lady's man or soldier.

Mrs. Amis' place is the frontier now, with no one between her and DeSoto. The entire country from Omega to Vicksburg is deserted and many of the back places also. There is a constant stream of men passing, and Mrs. Amis is dreadfully worried by men begging to stay all night and for meals. It is a charming place to visit. Annie has changed less in growing up than any girl I ever saw. She is the same girl she was ten years ago, only grown up and not the least affected, and as a child she was a bundle of it. She was at school in Philadelphia for several years and last in New Orleans for a few months. She plays beautifully on the piano, with such ease I can listen by the hour. She plays on the harp, speaks French well, knows some Latin and Spanish, and is fond of reading, though there was little reading she would allow either of us while together. And they have a good library which was very tempting. She is a pronounced blonde. We were both glad to be together again as we were when little children, after our long separation at different schools.

Oct. 25: Mrs. Payne went back to Mrs. Hardison's today and Emily Norris is staying with us until Mrs. Savage gets back from the Bayou. Found Mrs. Carson here when I got back. Mrs. Amis sent me home with Lou in the carriage for

protection. We passed several squads of soldiers on picket duty, but they let us through without a pass. We were evidently not suspicious characters.

There is so much to be done now that I am at home. I hardly know where to commence—three pairs of gloves and a necktie to be knit, three dresses to make, and all my clothes to be mended. Things are certainly mended as long as possible now. As Mr. Stenckrath used to say, “Be kind to my old shirts, Emma”—they just *had* to last.

Oct. 29: Saturday was a day of general upheaval having the carpets put down and general renovating. A cold raw day. When in the height of the discomfort, Mrs. Payne, Julia, and Miss Carrie Lowry were announced. Theirs was a cold welcome at first as there was not a good fire in the house, but Webster soon had one blazing in the parlor and dining room. They stayed until Monday and Julia and Mrs. Payne returned with Carrie. Carrie is a very talkative, nice girl with only one good feature in her face, splendid grey eyes. She escapes being ugly. She has pretty teeth and glossy black hair but a most unbecoming mouth and nose. Am sure we would like her much on closer acquaintance. She is a most industrious, capable girl.

Jimmy went to Mississippi today to get leather to make shoes for the Negroes. Should he fail to get it, the Negroes will certainly suffer in the cold. Mamma has discharged Mr. McRae and a Mr. Blakely is overseeing. Mr. McRae proved to be utterly destitute of principle. The Negroes are busy housing the potatoes and goober peas [peanuts] and priming the sugar cane. We shall have some cane should My Brother come now.

I was up late last night writing letters to all our soldiers and to Aunt Laura, thanking her for the loan of some of her clothes when I went to Annie's as I had carried very little to Vicksburg for a three-day stay. Aunt Laura always has such quantities of everything necessary.

Mrs. Alexander has been here all day and tonight is kindly helping me to make another harness. The one Jimmy and I

made is entirely too fine. We will finish this one tomorrow and Mrs. Alexander will start the loom.

Anna Dobbs came out for Emily, and Mr. Curry, Mr. Hardison, and Dr. Bowman paid us a call.

Oct. 31: Mamma has been busy for the last two days superintending the weaving which is at last underway. And what a slow process it is to be sure. Spent today at Mrs. Savage's and brought the little girls out to stay with Sister until Mr. Savage returns from another visit to the Bayou. Mamma got a quantity of shrubbery, and she will help Uncle Hoccles set it out half the day tomorrow. I started Mr. Templeton's gloves today. Time alone can tell when they will be finished. My comforter promises to be prettier than Anna's shawl, but *chacun à son goût*.

Jimmy came back this evening and to Mamma's agreeable surprise succeeded in getting the leather. Jimmy is developing into a "cute" little trader,⁶⁷ now that he is the only man about the house and must be Mamma's right hand.

Aunt Laura sent word by Jimmy that she will come up on the tenth of November to stay all winter, if Mamma will send for her. Dr. Buckner has just rejoined his company and she is very sad. We will be delighted to have her, but I fear the swamp in winter will weary her dreadfully. And then she cannot hear so regularly from Dr. Buckner. But she would be fearfully lonely with only Beverly and herself in the house all winter. Here it is seldom lonely. And dear little Beverly will be a treasure in the house, and she will so enjoy the freedom of the country.

We have a number of books on hand. All borrowed but too busy to read just now.

Nov. 7: How quickly this week has slipped away. Company and busy hands make the time fly. Anna came out in the middle of the week, sent the little girls and remained until Mrs. Savage came, spent the day and carried her home. After they left, Johnny and I were sitting cosily by the parlor fire. I had been practicing and he was knitting on a glove

⁶⁷ A shortening of acute.

when in came Mary Richards and Mollie Hunt, an old schoolmate. I was so surprised I hardly knew her at first, but the sound of her voice recalled old school times.

Mollie and her father are on their way from Arkansas to Vicksburg. They had supper at Mrs. Curry's and came out to get me to spend the night with Mollie. Mamma approved of the plan and I was glad of a chance for a good chat with Mollie. I went back with them and had a pleasant visit in spite of that hateful Mr. Smith. "Don't be bashful, Kate—do play—I ain't a going to court ye" was one of his trying speeches, with a grin and a leer that made me really wish him dumb. What a true Yankee he is in everything, even the set of his coat.

Mollie gave me a full and particular account of her various love affairs, about like the play of *Hamlet* with Hamlet left out. She would not tell me the names of any of her lovers. She must have had scores. She says she has four on hand now, all waiting in trembling apprehension of yes or no. She thinks she will say no to all. What a garment of comfort self-satisfaction is. Oh, for a nice large cloak of self-appreciation.

Annie Amis with Mary and Lou Dancy did not come on Thursday as they promised. And I had all the candy and marmalade agreed on awaiting them. The candy found willing little mouths, and the marmalade is carefully put away awaiting future reference. Emily, the boys, and I had frequent rides. Wonka is a most charming horse, as easy as a cradle and swift as the wind.

We all went with Mamma to the camp at Winn Forest, but as they were not drilling we did not stop. Anna, the boys, and I rode again to the camp and home in a gale of cold wind that made us cry for the poor soldier boys in their open tents. We nestle closer in our warm blankets as we think in the night how cold they must be.

An old letter from My Brother begging Mamma to secure a place in the back country and move to it. He says, if possible, he will get a furlough home in the winter. I could shake Tom Manlove for coming home this time instead of

letting My Brother have the chance. Brother Coley and Brother Walter and their mess are getting along in real jolly style. Brother Walter feels all right now that he is with his brother.

Galveston has fallen, a disgrace to us for fortifying it so badly.⁶⁸ The enemy are redoubling their exertions at every point and are awaiting a rise in the river to make an overwhelming attack on Vicksburg. In God alone is our trust.

Nov. 10: Mamma went to Vicksburg today and I am left at home as commander-in-chief with Little Sister and the two boys, Johnny and Jimmy, as aides. We are getting on bravely today, pickle making, weaving, etc., etc. I think I should like keeping house if I were forty years old and had no one to interfere, but now it is horrid work, vanity and vexation of spirits.

Jimmy is away tonight sitting up with Mr. McRae who is not expected to live through the night. And his wife is not here to comfort him.

Ah, the lovely autumn weather. One should be out in it riding or walking most of the day. If Annie had only come, we could have had a charming time riding and driving in the soft, hazy, dreamy days.

Mamma and I went out to Mrs. Henderson's Saturday morning to see Mrs. Gustine, who is staying there now. She has been very ill and is still unable to be up. Mary and I had a gay talk discussing Col. Pargoud. We have all our traps set and baited should he venture out here again. We made an agreement so that no feeling of jealousy should mar our friendship. Should I trap the irresistible Colonel, she is to be invited to spend a month at his "palace." Should she be the successful trapper, I am to have a standing invitation to "his marble halls." Poor Colonel. His cheeks must burn the way the girls are discussing his fancied perfections—fancied, for not a girl of us has ever seen him. He is our standing joke. We also agreed on Mr. Valentine's cool assurance in sending word to all the girls he knows to knit him

⁶⁸ Galveston was captured by the Federal Navy October 10, 1862.

everything they can think of. He wants a complete outfit from each one. He did have the grace to ask Mary to make the things, and she has started on the article the easiest to make, a needle book. But if he does not soon repeat his call, Mary will donate that to some more deserving youth. None of us will do anything for him just now. He needs a little judicious snubbing. He holds a lady's favors too lightly. In the early days I used to think he would make quite an ideal lover, but no indeed, not now that I know him better. He would run me crazy and ruin my temper in a week. He is very argumentative and I feel like contradicting him always. We do not think alike on any subject. Neither Anna nor Julia like him at all, and Mary knows him only slightly.

Mr. McRae was nursing Ashburn on his death bed a year ago tonight, and now he too is sinking into the cold arms of Death. In the presence of Death, we feel at its fullest God's terrible power.

Nov. 16: Since writing last, Jimmy has been violently ill with pneumonia. He is somewhat better but not relieved and is suffering intensely with a deep blister.⁶⁹ He has been so good and patient. Mamma returned from Vicksburg Wednesday night, and Jimmy was taken with a chill that night and by twelve next day was so ill Mamma thought he would die. She was all alone, except Sister, and could not get a doctor until twelve that night when Drs. Devine and Jackson both came. They have been attending him ever since. Johnny and I had gone to Vicksburg for me to attend a large party, given by Capt. and Mrs. Manlove, and there is where I was, dancing and amusing myself, while my poor little brother was suffering so. How thankful we were that Mamma had gotten home before he was taken sick. Aunt Laura and Beverly came up the next day with us and Other Pa was here when we got back. We were so glad to see him. He is such a help with Jimmy, for he knows so much about sickness.

⁶⁹ It was a common medical practice in treating pneumonia, to blister the patient on the back with some hot application in order to relieve the congestion in the lungs.

Aunt Laura will stay until spring, maybe until the war is over. Mamma sent for Aunt Laura's house servants and baggage today for the second time. The ferry is so crowded it is almost impossible to get anything across, and we fear it will be difficult to get Aunt Laura's things even this time of sending. Other Pa is looking well but for his long, snow-white beard. It makes him look so much older. Uncle Johnny has a little daughter two months old named Sarah Louisa for her two grandmothers. He seems quite proud of the little scrap. Jimmy has held quite a levee while being ill.

Nov. 30: Jimmy has been so ill that we have had no time to think of anything else. Both Dr. Jackson and Dr. Devine had given him up and stopped all remedies, and Mamma had thought him dying for a day and night. He was cold to his knees and so blind that he could not see to the foot of the bed. We were all standing around him expecting death at any minute when Dr. Meux came in. Mamma had sent for him some days before, but he had been away. He examined Jimmy and said he thought he had one chance for recovery, but Mamma said no it was too late. She would not have him tortured any more. He was past the power of medicine. But Other Pa reasoned with her, told her if there was the slightest chance, it must be taken, and told Dr. Meux to take charge of the case and do all possible to save him. The Doctor recommended giving him brandy in eggnog every thirty minutes and nourishment every fifteen minutes. He put something on the raw angry blister to allay the burning, itching sensation that had tortured him so. And at night he tried as a last resort to relieve the lungs by burning him under the shoulder blades with turpentine and a hot iron. A flannel was wet with the turpentine, laid on him, and ironed. It was exquisitely painful, and they would not let Mamma be in the room. When she returned after it was over, Jimmy was gasping for breath and could just mutter, "They have nearly killed me, Mamma. Don't leave me any more." As soon as the pain subsided he seemed a little better. He had not slept for eleven nights, and the Doctor said that that was enough to kill him without the disease. The Doctor did

all he could to ease the pain of the blisters and gave him large doses of Battley's [?] sedative, and towards morning we had the pleasure of seeing him fall into a light sleep.

Since then, he has slowly improved, but is not yet quite out of danger. He is nearly covered with the most painful risings. Dr. Meux says it is from the circulation being so nearly stopped for so long. Under his shoulder blades the risings are dreadful, but Dr. Meux says he thinks they will save him from danger of going into consumption. They relieve the lungs. At the worst, Jimmy was fully conscious of his condition, but he felt no fear, only regrets that he should die without striking one blow for his Country.

No one ever faced Death more calmly and bravely and how beautifully he talked of his trust in God and the love of our Saviour. He felt no fear, and his faith in God's goodness and mercy was unswerving.

Since he has been a little better, he said, "Mamma, when I thought I was dying, I was not afraid, for I thought of God's promises and they comforted me." He was as simple minded and affectionate as a little child, and so devoted to Mamma that he could not bear for her to leave him for an hour. And he is restless and uneasy now whenever she is out of the room. Mamma has not undressed and gone regularly to bed since Jimmy was taken sick. She lies down by him, and if he cannot sleep he will not let her. He always touches her as soon as he wakes, and of course it wakes her at once. We feared her health would give way under the strain, but she has been mercifully strengthened. God's goodness and mercy seem so plain to us now. He has spared Jimmy to our prayers when all hope seemed vain. May Jimmy be as well prepared when Death comes to him at last as he was when Death seemed standing at his bedside.

Dr. Meux was certainly the instrument in God's hand to save Jimmy's life. We are so grateful to him. He stayed with him several days and nights without leaving. Now we feel that Dr. Meux is a friend of the family. He has spent several nights with us, "Not as a physician, Madam," he said, "but as a friend." Speaking of Jimmy, the day after

he first came he said, "I could not let that splendid young fellow die without trying to save him."

Events have crowded each other in the last two weeks. My Brother's promotion to major has given us great pleasure. After reading the announcement in the paper, we could talk of nothing else that night. How handsome he must look in his new uniform with the stars glittering on his collar. I know Mrs. Manlove is provoked. She was so sure Tom would be made major that she told Mamma he was already lieutenant colonel. She has been crowing over me every time we met this summer: "Well, Kate, maybe your brother is captain of the company. Now you know, my Tom has been promoted to major or colonel." Such was her usual greeting.

Wrote a letter of ten pages to My Brother today, telling him of Jimmy and all the plantation and country news. Hope he will take time to read it.

Four gunboats are again in these waters, steaming up and down between Omega and Young's Point. A squad came off once at the Bend. They were fired on and the commanding officer was killed. They retreated to their boats and have not landed since. There are several hundred men under Col. Pargoud following them up and down the river. When we first heard of the fleet at the Bend, we were much wrought up. Webster, Will, and Aunt Laura's dining room servant, William, with a wagonload of furniture, a barrel of flour, and a six mule team were all on the road somewhere between here and Vicksburg. We were certain they would be captured or the men would desert to the gunboats. But that night they came driving up, feeling that they had made a most hairbreadth escape. . . .

Dec. 3: Have been busy for two days writing letters and notes. A letter of six pages to Uncle Bo giving general home news. . . . One to Mrs. Johnstone reproaching her for not letting Cousin Jenny send me one of her dresses to make into an over-shirt for Mr. Valentine. Also, notes and letters to the four quarters of the globe. All are to be sent by Jessy, who runs the blockade to Vicksburg tomorrow to get the new carriage springs and a \$40 gallon of brandy, an awful price,

but Jimmy must have it. He is improving slowly, slowly. He is not yet able to sit up and sleeps no better. He has not slept now for forty-eight hours and is very restless.

Dr. Meux has been staying with us for several days—"as a friend, my dear lady." He is an odd, original man, very amusing and quite intelligent. Low and pudgy, he wears a sunburned wig and has a most infectious laugh. He does not spare your blushes and will discuss anything. This burden of entertaining him falls on me. He makes it easy by reading aloud from the poets, and he reads well.

We had another character to take dinner with us this week. Mr. Wylie, the talking man. When we met him at the Wells, he was known by the girls as "Major Jones."⁷⁰ He talks so incessantly that he can hardly spare time to eat.

Cousin Jenny gets married tomorrow in the church at Canton to a Dr. Saunders of that place. She wrote to Aunt Laura saying she wished to be married at her home, but when the letter came Aunt Laura had broken up housekeeping and was here with us. A day or two after the letter, Cousin Jenny and Mrs. Johnstone came driving up in Capt. Johnstone's ambulance.⁷¹ It was when Jimmy was at his worst, and they only stayed all night. Mamma begged Cousin Jenny to come here to be married and Aunt Laura wished her to do it. But she decided to stay in Canton. She wanted me to be bridesmaid, but under the circumstances it was impossible. I could not leave Jimmy, and there are too many Yankees between here and Canton to make it safe to leave home.

Neither her father nor sister will be present. They are both away. It is decidedly Cousin Jenny's own wedding. She has selected her trousseau and made all arrangements for herself. It seems strange in her since she has always been of such a timid, yielding nature. We have all taken up a

⁷⁰ Major Jones is the back country planter who is the central character of William Tappan Thompson's (1812-82) humorous *Major Jones's Courtship* (1844) in which the militia major of "Pineville," Ga., describes at length his difficulties in courting and marrying a Georgia belle.

⁷¹ A four-wheel vehicle usually used for hauling the sick and wounded but which became an all-purpose vehicle in the Confederacy.

prejudice against Dr. Saunders and think she is doing a bad thing for herself. Our judgement, made without seeing the man, is based on his weak, sentimental-looking picture and the lackadaisical letter he wrote Aunt Laura asking her consent to the marriage. Poor dear girl. May she be happier than we all think she will be.

Mr. Valentine was over a few days ago. We are friends again, and I have knitted gloves for him and am embroidering a tobacco bag at Mamma's earnest solicitation. He does not chew or smoke, and so he can only use it as a trophy. He aroused Mamma's sympathy by complaining of the way the girls have all treated him. They have not given him a thing. He begged me so hard to make something for him that I relented and am now on a high hunt for something suitable to make a fancy over-shirt. Cousin Jenny promised me a dress, but Mrs. Johnstone so represented to her that Mr. Valentine was very wealthy and could get what he needed that Cousin Jenny kept the dress. And I have not a thing that will do. We have cut up every silk and wool thing we have for the different boys. I wrote a note of reproach to Mrs. Johnstone and begged her to make the amende honorable by sacrificing one of her dresses for a poor shirtless Confederate. She promises to do the best she can and give me the first dress she wears out. That will not be until the end of the war. No one's dresses are ever considered worn out these days—as long as they can hold together.

Mrs. Carson spent several days and nights with us last week. She is staying at Monticello until Dr. Carson gets everything moved back to the place he has bought on Joe's Bayou. Mrs. Carson as usual is delighted with everything and everybody that is new. Novelty bears for her a charm that the oldest friendship cannot boast.

Mrs. Savage commenced falling back at the first alarm and dispatched her baggage train in great haste. They are all safely housed at Lambert Norris's.

Dec. 7: For the last three nights I have been staying in Jimmy's room, and Mamma has at last had a good rest. Today he is so much better that we have turned him over

to Johnny's fostering care for the night. Jimmy did not much like the idea of being left in Johnny and Webster's hands. This is the first night for over three weeks that we have not set up with him.

Mamma and I have been working hard for several days on the uniforms for Mr. Catlin and Mr. Newman. We finished them today and a lovely "pocket friend" for Mr. Valentine. Sent everything out to the camp with some candy, cake, and preserves for our friends and some eatables for the company. None of them were in camp so we did not hear anything when the men came back. But we will hear from all that work.

Dec. 12: Tuesday Sister and I went to Mrs. Hardison's to see Julia and Carrie Lowry. They were hard at work on soldier's clothes. They have twenty-four jackets to make, a trying job. I came home feeling ashamed of myself for having done so little and begged Mamma to send to the camp for some of the clothes to make. Mamma refused, saying that we have enough to do already, and really we have. Sister has been sick for several days with severe sorethroat and Jimmy improves hardly at all. He is still in bed and tonight has fever.

We thought maybe Mrs. Curry would do some sewing for the soldiers, and so I went over to see her. Lou and Mary would each undertake a suit and Miss Jefferies, who was there, would also make one, and we thought the Miss Richardsons maybe would do some sewing. I came back well pleased and sent Webster to camp for seven suits. He soon came back with only two suits and a jacket. All the other sewing had been given out so that was a job well off hand.

Mamma and I are busy making my grey silk. Mamma bought it in Vicksburg the last time she was down, and it cost a pretty penny.

Lt. Valentine has resigned his office and I am provoked. It was such a foolish thing to do just because some of the men requested his resignation. Why did he not have them put in the guardhouse? He seems to be the only officer in the company who tries to do his duty, and of course he is un-

popular. I hope it will not be accepted. I should like to have a six-month talk with him. I know he is dreadfully chagrined under all that indifferent manner.

Mamma has turned off Mr. Blakely. He would not do at all, and she has engaged a Mr. Ellison who comes tomorrow. Hope he will prove a good overseer. One is hard to get. Mamma has rented a place on Joe's Bayou above overflow from a Mr. Storey. Can send the Negroes there if the Yankees come again.

Hiram Tibbetts took dinner with us yesterday. He is "a slow coach." Mr. McGee drops in occasionally—as dry as ever.

Dec. 16: No news from My Brother for weeks. Do not know his address even. Uncle Bo is still at Fredericksburg and the boys at Grenada [Miss.], and are well. We get neither papers nor letters these days. Not a word from Kate Nailor since her marriage months ago. Why does marrying change one so? Why is it impossible to care for your friends if you have a new husband or wife? I should not think one lone man could take the place of all the loved ones of a lifetime. But I suppose a man's the reason.

Both the Messrs. Valentine came over yesterday in a pelt-ing rain, both wet. Lt. Valentine is deeply mortified. He said the morning after the petitions came in he was ordered out with a squad to watch a gun, and he sincerely hoped a shell would strike him. He tried to make the men do their duty and so angered them. Both Dr. Buckner and My Brother were requested to resign soon after they got their companies, but since they did not think of doing such a thing the dissatisfaction soon passed away. Capt. Harper's company is nearly entirely of poor Bayou Macon men who naturally have an ill feeling against the "rich swampers," and Mr. Valentine's reputed wealth has helped to antagonize them.

Mr. Valentine was so pleased with the things we sent him and begged so humbly for a tobacco bag (why should he want it when he does not smoke?) that I have promised to make a pretty one. Because of the number I have made, our

scraps of silk and velvet and embroidery silk are nearly exhausted.

Aunt Laura is low-spirited tonight thinking of Dr. Buckner so far away, though usually she is quite cheerful. Beverly is the greatest little treasure, a sunbeam in the house. Jimmy came out of his room today for the first time.

Dec. 29: Well, the most exciting Christmas of our lives has come and gone, and the excitement still continues as the bombardment on the river is incessant. This evening for several hours it seemed to be heavy guns at Omega.

We expected both the Mr. Valentines to dine with us Christmas. We had invited Mary Gustine out to spend the week and knew we would have much other company, and so we made up a lot of cakes and good things. Two days before Christmas we all rode over to the camp, Johnny and I on horseback and the others in the carriage, to see Capt. Benton's artillery drill. Capt. Harper and Mr. Valentine came to talk to us and to say, as orders were very strict, they would be unable to leave camp Christmas Day but would like to come to see us Christmas Eve. Of course, we would be glad to have them, and after a pleasant little chat with the soldiers gathered around gazing at us we started home. Johnny and I gathered a lot of mistletoe and crimson casino berries, and we decorated the parlor and hall prettily next day, getting through just as Mary Gustine drove up. We sent some clothes out to camp and decided to write Capt. Harper to bring any of his friends. Soon after dark he, Capt. Martin from Monroe, Capt. Benton, Lt. Nolley, and Lt. Valentine came in. We gave them a first-class eggnog and intended giving them another after supper, but they went out and before we knew it took some of the brandy straight. Since brandy is \$60 a gallon and far from plentiful, we would not let them have any more in eggnog or anything else. They had had plenty. We had a fine supper and all enjoyed the evening. Next morning, Christine, Mary, and I were amusing ourselves at the piano when old Mr. Valentine came in and after some delay gave us to understand it was My Brother who was killed at Fredericksburg and not another Lt. Stone

as we thought. Mamma was at once in despair and gave way to the wildest grief. We sent a messenger at once for Mr. Valentine's paper, another to the nearest telegraph office, and Johnny got ready at once and started for Vicksburg to get full particulars. Mamma could not listen to reason. She was sure he was dead and she was heartbroken. As soon as possible the man came with the paper, and reading it over we saw at once Mr. Valentine was mistaken. It was not our boy who had fallen but someone else's darling with a similar name. The relief was very great but the mischief was done.

Our Christmas was ruined, and Johnny was on his way to Vicksburg. Mr. Valentine was very contrite and so sorry for his great mistake. We did not know until three days later that Johnny had been taken and was a prisoner on the gunboats. Mr. Valentine brought us the news of the arrival of a large Yankee fleet at Omega and the landing of the men. When the officers reached camp Christmas night, the enemy were landing in large force.⁷² They at once went on picket duty and the next morning were ordered to break camp and fall back on Tensas or to Delhi. We have heard nothing of them since. A force of 5,000 Yankees marched to Delhi or Dallas, burned some government stores and the bridges, tore up the railroad track, and upon returning embarked for Vicksburg.⁷³ We expected the Yankees on the place for three days, and the overseer carried most of the Negroes back to the Joe's Bayou place. But as they did not come, the Negroes were brought back in a pouring rain disgusted with their Christmas outing.

The houses were burned on Buckhorn, except the dwelling.

⁷² The Federals had completed their plans for the big push. General Sherman assembled over 30,000 troops, a large fleet of steamboats to transport them, and the whole gunboat fleet. The expedition left Memphis December 19, and reached Milliken's Bend on Christmas Day, 1862. Brigadier General A. J. Smith's division was left at Milliken's Bend while the remainder of the force moved up the Yazoo River to prepare for the attack on Vicksburg from the north.—*Personal Memoirs of Gen. W. T. Sherman* (New York, 1890), I, 313-14, 317.

⁷³ On December 25 General Sherman dispatched General Stephen G. Burbridge's brigade inland from Milliken's Bend to cut the Vicksburg, Shreveport, and Texas Railroad. Bridges over the Tensas River and Bayou Macon were burned, as was the depot at Delhi.—*Ibid.*, 317.

All the mules and horses they could find were taken and some Negroes, and they made prisoners of all the men, the private citizens, that came in their way. But they did better than on their previous raids as they did not pillage the houses.

They made a prisoner of Johnny as he was crossing the bridge at Mrs. Scott's and kept him on the gunboat three days. They questioned Johnny, trying to find out what he knew of the troops, guns, government stores, etc., in the country, but he refused to tell them anything. Then the officers tried to frighten him. Col. Wright took him off privately and told him the men were anxious to hang him. If he would tell Col. Wright all he knew about the soldiers, he would be saved from the fury of the soldiers. Col. Wright said that they had hanged men at several points coming down the river for not talking, but as Johnny was a boy he wanted to save him. His threats had no effect on Johnny. He said that he knew the Colonel was telling a story and that they were not going to hang him.

He became quite a favorite with the soldiers. They called him "Bub" and amused themselves arguing with him. Some of them encouraged him with "That's right, Bub. Stand up for your principles." How much more of a man he proved himself than Duncan Gustine, nearly grown, who was frightened into piloting them through the country, and everybody has been abusing him for cowardice ever since. The Yankees released the prisoners taken after two or three days.

I am so afraid they will get my horse Wonka. I wish we had sent him to the Bayou. Webster has him in charge, hidden in the canebrake. Mary and Ella Gustine have gone home and I am used up with sorethroat and inflamed eyes.

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1863

"Strangers in a Strange land"

Jan. 1: My dear Brother came home this morning and in perfect health. How overjoyed we are to have him with us, but oh the disappointment that he is still only a captain. It seems he and the other gentlemen mentioned at the same time were recommended by the officers of their regiment for the field offices and a petition sent up for their promotion, but by the rules of war promotion could not go that way. The senior officers must go up first and so Tom Manlove is lieutenant colonel and the senior captain, major. Tom Manlove headed a petition signed by all the officers of the regiment asking that My Brother be made colonel, but My Brother would not let it be sent up. I am awfully sorry. I fear now he will never be promoted. He has no ambition and a low opinion of his capabilities. It is foolish for me to feel so bad about it when I should be perfectly happy that he has escaped the myriad dangers and is with us again. He was mentioned for gallant conduct in Gen. Featherston's report of the battles before Richmond. He was highly complimented on the field of battle at Sharpsburg by Gen. D. H. Hill and again in his official report.

Dear fellow, if anybody deserves promotion he does. He may get the colonelcy of his old battalion, now the 48th Miss. Regt. He was slightly wounded in the foot at the battle of Fredericksburg, and that is why he was allowed to come home. He is looking well and cheerful. A piece of shell made a slight scar on his face but his whiskers conceal it. To me his coming was no surprise. I have been looking for him for two months, but the others were not so confident. He came by way of Mrs. Amis', and she sent him on by horseback.

Uncle Bo, he reports, is in the finest health and spirits, and our other soldiers are still at Grenada and well.

He brings encouraging news of successes. We have repulsed the enemy twice between the Yazoo and Vicksburg. Gen. Van Dorn has retaken Holly Springs and is threatening Memphis. Our victory at Fredericksburg was complete but barren of result, only it has depressed and surprised the North. Altogether we are getting the better of our foes.

Most of the family are troubled with inflamed eyes and mine are paining me so, from long writing I suppose. This has truly been a Happy New Year to us all, white and black.

Jan. 25: Sunday. After three weeks of silence let me think of what has happened. The Yankees, after an absence of more than a week employed in taking Arkansas Post,¹ have returned in large force, have invested Vicksburg, and are cutting another ditch across the point above DeSoto, or it may be deepening the first ditch.² My Brother, Mr. Hardison, Dr. Waddell, and several other Louisiana gentlemen were in Vicksburg when the boats came in sight, and they had great trouble regaining their horses, just missing several encounters with scouting bands.

My Brother started off this morning with the best and strongest of the Negroes to look for a place west of the

¹ Arkansas Post (Fort Hindman), January 11, 1863.

² The attempt to approach Vicksburg by land from the north failed when General Sherman was defeated, December 27–January 3, 1863, at Chickasaw Bayou. Federal forces were then concentrated on the Mississippi above Vicksburg with the plan of bypassing Vicksburg and coming in behind the city. General Grant ordered work resumed on the canal across the peninsula at DeSoto. Grant himself arrived at Young's Point on January 29 and assumed command of the entire force on January 30. He established headquarters at Milliken's Bend to administer the army which was strung along the bank of the river from Young's Point to Lake Providence, a distance of sixty miles. The plan for bypassing Vicksburg consisted of three phases: first, the canal at DeSoto; second, a channel from Lake Providence into Bayou Macon, the Tensas, the Ouachita, the Red, and finally into the Mississippi again below Natchez; third, a channel at Duckport, near Milliken's Bend, into Willow Bayou for passage through Roundaway Bayou to the Mississippi at New Carthage.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 462–70; *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant* (New York, 1917) I, 372–83; and *Personal Memoirs of Gen. W. T. Sherman*, I, 333, 342–43.

Ouachita. Only the old and sickly with the house servants are left here. He is sure we will all be forced to leave this place as the enemy intend going into camp at the Bend, and in the event of their defeat at Vicksburg which is certain, will lay this whole country waste, sending out bands of Negroes and soldiers to burn and destroy. My Brother thinks we had better leave at once, and we will commence packing tomorrow. The Negroes did so hate to go and so do we.

We have retaken Galveston under Gen. Magruder,³ and the *Alabama* and *Florida* are spreading death and destruction on the seas.⁴ We have fought another Shiloh battle at Murfreesboro,⁵ and the enemy have evacuated Island No. 10. Three day's fighting at Vicksburg and the enemy badly whipped.

Heard from the boys by Joe's servant, who is home on a visit. All well. Their regiment is now under Van Dorn.

Jan. 26: Preparing to run from the Yankees, I commit my book to the bottom of a packing box with only a slight chance of seeing it again.

March 2: Saturday [Monday] I think. We have not had an almanac for more than a year, and so I can only guess at the time until someone better posted comes along. The Yankees have not visited us yet, and so after more than a month's concealment I take my book out to write again.

The soldiers have been all around us but not on the place. At first we were frightened, expecting them all the time and preparing to start for the hills beyond the Macon, the Mecca for most of the refugeeing planters. Mamma had all the carpets taken up and the valuable clothes and everything but the furniture sent away or ready to send when My

³ Galveston was recaptured on January 1, 1863, by a joint army-navy force under the command of General John B. Magruder.—A. T. Mahan, *The Gulf and Inland Waters* (New York, 1883), 108–109.

⁴ The *Alabama* and the *Florida* were fast vessels built for the Confederate Government for the purpose of destroying Northern ocean commerce.—*Battles and Leaders*, IV, 595, 600–14.

⁵ Stone's River (Murfreesboro), Tenn., December 31–January 2, 1863.

Brother came back from Delhi, where he left the Negroes waiting until they could be shipped on the train. Such a crowd was there that it will be several days before they can get off.

He gave such a disheartening account of the roads—they are impassable for anything but a six-mule team—that he and Mamma concluded it was impossible to move at this time and we would await further developments here. Mamma has had the house put in order, and we are again comfortable. I am so glad for I dreaded going into the back country, where we would never see or hear anything among total strangers, and to leave our pleasant home most probably to be destroyed by the Yankees, and we may be able to protect it if we are here.

Brother has been gone for more than a month. He has taken the Negro men to the salt works [near Winnfield, La.]⁶ away beyond Monroe and put them to work. Jimmy returned from there two weeks ago, and Mamma sent out the overseer, Mr. Ellsworth. We have been looking for My Brother for ten days.

Mamma thought of sending Jimmy back to Virginia with My Brother to go to school at Lexington, but now that the conscription is being so rigidly enforced she thinks both Mr. Storey and Mr. Ellison may both be enrolled. She will have no one but Jimmy to depend on, and so she will keep him at home. I am begging her to send Johnny. One of the worst features of the war is that it deprives all the boys of an education.

My Brother must return to Virginia very soon, now that his furlough is out. We do not see how he can possibly get to Vicksburg. The Yankees and the water together make it a hard road to travel, even for the runaway Negroes.

Jane, Aunt Laura's cook, and Aunt Lucy had a terrible row Tuesday night. Jane cut a great gash in Lucy's face with a blow from a chair and hurt her severely. Mamma had Jane called up to interview her on the subject, and she came with a big carving knife in her hand and fire in her eyes.

⁶ About 110 miles to the southwest.

She scared me. She is nearly six feet tall and powerful in proportion, as black as night and with a fearful temper. She is a splendid cook and that is why Dr. Buckner has kept her so long. Aunt Laura always was afraid of her, and I always thought Dr. Buckner stood in wholesome dread of her. He would never scold her, but he would not sell her, though Aunt Laura often begged him to get rid of her. Aunt Laura had a long, lingering illness lasting several months, and she always thought Jane kept her poisoned. Jane showed a very surly, aggressive temper while Mamma was talking to her, and so Mamma did not say much. Jane went to her room and that night took her two children, a girl and a boy about half-grown, and in company with one of Mr. Hardison's men started for the camp at DeSoto. I think we are all glad she has gone. We felt her a constant menace. She must have had a bad trip. They were out in that blinding rain Wednesday and Wednesday night with only two blankets as protection and not much to eat. Mr. Graves saw them yesterday sitting on the levee at Mr. Utz's in company with fifty others, waiting to be ferried across at the break there in a dugout. All the Negroes are running away now, and there are numbers of them. They have to stop at the break and wait to be ferried over by an old Negro in a dugout, and so there are crowds waiting all the time. Col. Graves went down there yesterday to try to reclaim three of his who had escaped. Three had just been drowned, trying to get over, and he thought from the description they were his.

Poor creatures, I am sorry for them. How horrible it all is. We had a scene of terror the night Jane left: The quarreling and screaming, the blood streaming down Lucy's face, Jane's fiery looks and speeches, Johnny and Uncle Bob's pursuit of her as she rushed away, the discovery that the children were gone, and then just as we had all quieted down, the cry of fire. The loom room had caught from some hot ashes, but we at once thought Jane was wreaking vengeance on us all by trying to burn us out. We would not have been surprised to have her slip up and stick any of us in the back. Johnny was our only protector as Jimmy was away. I went around

bravely in appearance with a five-shooter in my hand.⁷ Found out afterwards it was only dangerous to look at as it was not loaded.

Mamma spoke of sending next day for Jane, but Aunt Laura implored her not to. She was only too thankful to get rid of her. She had been a terror to her for years. I think everybody on the place was thankful to get rid of her. The Negroes dreaded her as much as the white folks. They thought her a hoodoo woman.

The place looks deserted now with its empty cabins and neglected fields, and the scene is the same wherever we go. Mr. Valentine, Mr. Hardison, and Mr. Graves are our only neighbors, and occasionally Duncan Gustine or Dr. Meux come out. But as Dr. Meux generally comes to spend a week, and always in bad weather, we rather dread his visits.

It has been a month of warm weather and constant rain and the roads are impassable. We have not been out of the house for three weeks. Already the fruit trees are a faint green and the grass is springing in the yard. Spring is early this year. Over the woods in front of the house hangs a faint green mist with the red of the maples shining through, and this morning Sister brought in a bunch of pale wild violets, sweet as a promise that winter is gone. The hardy garden violets and the quaint little heartsease have been perfuming the winter wind for weeks, and the garden is gay with jonquils and narcissus.

March 3: Last night it was reported that the Yankees were at Dr. Devine's, and we looked for them here today. My Brother and Mr. Hardison, who is conscript agent, went out early this morning to stay in the woods until nightfall, as they do not want to be captured and ornament a Yankee prison. It is My Brother's last day at home too, and we can see nothing of him because of those horrid Yankees. The fear of his imprisonment alone reconciles us to his departure. We are in hourly dread of his being taken. We will feel safe only when he is across the river again. How dreadful we

⁷ A pistol with a revolving chamber containing five bullets.

would feel should he be captured as poor Lt. Valentine was a week ago. He had just ridden up from Richmond where his company is stationed to see his father for a day and had not been in the house ten minutes when four Yankee soldiers, who had been robbing Mr. Conley's place, rode into the yard. Mr. Valentine did not think there was a soldier in ten miles. They carried him off at once to the river, and in a few days Mr. Valentine heard that his son had been sent to Alton, Ill. Mark had only a change of clothes and not a cent of money, but Mr. Valentine made arrangements with the captain of a Yankee boat, who went out to see him, to furnish Mark with money, if Mr. Valentine will deliver a few bales of cotton on the river. Lt. Valentine has an aunt living near Alton, and so he may fare very well. My Brother and Mr. Valentine had left the house about ten minutes before Mark came, and they so regret it, as they think they three could certainly have captured four Yankees. We are glad their theory was not put to the test.

Johnny who has been out scouting reports the Yankees at Rescue, the adjoining place, yesterday hunting horses and Negroes, and today they are scattered all through the lower neighborhood on the same quest. This band is said to be Kansas Jayhawkers, the very offscourings of the Northern Army. They say they will take by force all Negroes, whether they wish to go or not. A great number of Negroes have gone to the Yankees from this section. Mr. Watson and his father-in-law, Mr. Scott, living, I think, on Eagle Lake near Richmond got up one morning and found every Negro gone, about seventy-five, only three little girls left. The ladies actually had to get up and get breakfast. They said it was funny to see their first attempt at milking. Mr. Matt Johnson has lost every Negro off one place and a number from the other places. Keene Richards has lost 160 from Transylvania and fifty of them are reported dead. The Negroes at work on the canal have what they call black measles, and it is very fatal to them.⁸

⁸ Hundreds of Negroes worked on the canals in the unhealthy conditions described by General Grant: "The river was higher than its

March 4: My Brother started this morning on his long and weary journey to Virginia. Johnny will be with him until he crosses the river. He hopes to get across at New Carthage, but there are sloughs and bayous to swim, breaks to cross, and marauding bands of Yankees to avoid before he reaches the river. He may have to go as far as Waterproof.⁹ We will feel greatly relieved when we know that he and his servant are safely over. Wesley goes with him this time, and we are sure he will be faithful. He is the engineer for the gin, but there is no telling when the gin will run again. We sent letters by them, but hope for no answers until the siege of Vicksburg is raised. It is hard to give My Brother up again. We had seen so little of him.

When we heard from Brother Coley and Dr. Buckner nearly a month ago, they had furloughs and had reached Vicksburg on their way home when they heard that Gen. Van Dorn was to make a great cavalry raid into Kentucky. They at once turned back and rejoined their commands. Brother Coley wrote that he could not possibly miss such a chance for a good fight. Well, they could not come here with the slightest safety, now that there are wandering parties of soldiers all through the swamp. The Yankees are very daring, swimming the bayous, plunging through the mud of the unbroken swamp, often only two or three of them together. One company of good men could put a stop to all of this, but all our men are across the Macon with no desire to come this way. We hear they are panic-stricken at the name of a Yankee and run the other way. It is well that the honor of Louisiana does not depend on the troops on this side of the river.¹⁰

natural banks from December, 1862, to the following April. . . . the levees were neglected and broken in many places, and the whole country was covered with water. Troops could scarcely find dry ground on which to pitch their tents. Malarial fevers broke out among the men. Measles and smallpox also attacked them."—*Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, I, 382.

⁹ New Carthage, La., was on the Mississippi below Vicksburg, Waterproof farther down, almost as far as Natchez.

¹⁰ Confederate strength in the Trans-Mississippi Department (Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana north of Red River) had declined for

We get no Southern papers but occasionally a Northern paper from the people who are still on the river. They are all said to have taken the oath and to have letters of protection from the general commanding.¹¹ Dr. Taylor, Mr. Harris, Mr. Rucker, and Mrs. Nutt are some of the suspected parties. Gen. Grant is said to have been very rude to Mrs. Nutt when she applied for protection. What else could she have expected from a Yankee general? There are some troops still at Lake Providence. We cannot hear whether they are still working on their grand canal or not.¹² We suppose they will harass this section until the river falls and they again attack Vicksburg.

March 5: Mr. Valentine came over last evening in very low spirits indeed. He says his Negroes will not even pretend to work and are very impudent, and he thinks they will all go off in a body the next time the Yankees come on his place.

He brought the welcome news of the departure of that body of Jayhawkers that was on Mrs. Evans' place. They have completely ruined Mr. Catlin's, Mrs. Evans', and Mrs. Stevens' places, taking all the Negroes and all kinds of stock. The Negro women marched off in their mistresses' dresses.

Jimmy has been for some time with the Negroes at the salt works. We are in a helpless situation, three ladies and two little girls and not a white man or even a gun on the place, not even a boy until Johnny gets back. And the scouts may take him. We can find rest only in the thought that we are in God's hands.

March 8: Mr. Thompson took dinner here yesterday and gave us the news from far and wide. He is son-in-law of Mr. Lowry. We have taken two gunboats below Vicksburg, one

almost a year as the Confederate Government sent more and more troops to the eastern front. In the region west of the river there was no force of sufficient strength to attack Grant's large army.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 454-56; J. P. Blessington, *The Campaigns of Walker's Texas Division* (New York, 1875), 61-68.

¹¹ Apparently an oath of allegiance to the Union.

¹² Work was still going on at the Lake Providence canal, although General Grant had little hope that the project would succeed.—*Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, I, 374.

by the bravery of one of our pilots. He had been taken on one of our captured boats and impressed into service to run a gunboat up Red River. He succeeded in running the boat under one of our river batteries, and in the confusion of the attack he escaped to land, though four Yankees had been set to guard him.¹³

There are only twenty Negroes left on Mrs. Tibbetts' five places, and Dr. Tibbetts has only one left, a superannuated woman helpless to do anything. The ladies are cooking, washing, etc., while Hiram Tibbetts is wood chopper.

The Yankees have five thousand Negroes camped at Lake Providence, all they have taken from the places up the river. They had an army of 30,000 men camped there, but they find the canal through to the Macon not feasible. They have moved up to Ashton to try a new canal there, if they can close the break at that point.

March 9: Aunt Lucy's little girl Linda died this morning from the effect of the measles. It is the first child she ever lost and she is much distressed. Little Dora is also very ill from the same cause.

Johnny returned yesterday evening with fever. He left My Brother within nine miles of Carthage. My Brother was to go the rest of the way in a canoe until he got on the other side of the river, when he would walk up to Vicksburg. He stopped to see Mary Gustine, and she joined them and went on down to see Julia at Mrs. Cochran's. So he got to see Julia at last. Julia in her note to me says she has seen Mrs. Bow Barr several times. Lottie was one foolish girl to marry that dissipated fellow. She had better have lived and died an old maid.

We have heard a good many guns today and a boat whistle at Omega. Must be landing troops there. There must be a

¹³ The Federal *Queen of the West* ran the Vicksburg batteries February 2, 1863, and was raiding in the Red River area until February 14 when it ran aground in front of a Confederate shore battery about fifty miles up Red River. A *New York Tribune* correspondent on board wrote, "Our pilot, whether designedly or otherwise, I know not, ran the *Queen* aground, and at the same instant the batteries opened fire upon us."—Gosnell, *Guns on the Western Waters*, 186.

large force at the Bend now, as they have been moving men up for some days. Young's Point and DeSoto are said to be under water, and they are forced to leave.¹⁴ Mr. Joe Noland's is to be headquarters we hear. We hear that Mr. Hans Harris is having trouble with the Yankees, notwithstanding his protection papers, and that it is not necessary to take the oath to be protected, and so I retract what I said about the traitors on the river. Am glad it was false—except Dr. Taylor of Willow Bayou. We truly believe him to be false to the South. His wife has gone North with her children. She is from there and must have contaminated her husband. Mr. Montague's last two sons, in company with two friends, have gone over to the Yankees. Now Mr. Montague has all five of his sons in the North. It is strange that he could raise five sons in the South to love the North better than their own native land. Let us hope he is satisfied with them, as no one else is. All have a hearty contempt for them. What a disgrace to belong to that family.

The fruit trees are in full bloom now and our young orchard makes quite a show. Johnny is thinking of planting his melons when Uncle Hoccles get time. Quite a variety of vegetables are up and growing nicely.

March 11: When My Brother was at home, he heard a few days before he left that the Yankees had discovered quite a lot of cotton bales hidden by the planters on a ridge in the swamp near Mr. Valentine's and of course were coming at once to get it. Cotton is so valuable now. So he rode over that dark night all alone with a pocketful of matches, and after fumbling around through the swamp for some time found it. With a good deal of trouble, he set it afire, staying by it until daybreak when he left for fear some of the Negroes would see him and tell the Yankees, who would come and burn us out. He did see two or three Negroes looking at him

¹⁴ General Sherman stated that high waters early in March forced removal of McClelland's corps from Young's Point to Milliken's Bend. General Grant reported that work on the canal was interrupted on March 8 by a sudden rise in the river.—*Personal Memoirs of Gen. W. T. Sherman*, I, 333; *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, I, 372.

as he galloped through Mr. Valentine's place. That morning a long train of wagons came pulling through the mud. All the Yankee teamsters were delighted at the idea of getting such a pile of cotton hidden by the Rebs, when, lo and behold, there was nothing but a burning, smouldering pile. The lovely cotton was all gone. We hear they were furious and threatened to burn every house within five miles and hang the men who did it. But they did not know the *men*, and by the time suspicion pointed at My Brother he was off and away. The affair has blown over, but it made us tremble in our shoes for several days for fear they would come and burn us out.

March 12: So many are getting letters of protection from the general at the Bend. We cannot hear his name.¹⁵ Aunt Laura, formerly so bitter against the Yankees, is now urging Mamma to go in to Omega and get letters protecting us.

The enemy have now been three months before Vicksburg doing nothing against the city, but scourging this part of the country. The opinion now is that they will not attack the place at all. The deserters say the soldiers will not fight at Vicksburg. They say that the place is impregnable, that they will not fight to meet certain defeat, and that there is great dissatisfaction both among the officers and men. They will not pay off the men for fear they will desert. For a time there were frequent desertions. I must think there will be an attempt to storm the city. I cannot think they will make all this preparation and gather this great army without at last making an attempt to capture it.

When the fortifications were commenced, no one dreamed that Vicksburg would hold out this long. If the Yankees had come right on after the fall of New Orleans, Vicksburg would have fallen with hardly a struggle. It was strange that they did not push on at once. Now it seems almost a second Gibraltar.

We hear that Gen. [Braxton] Bragg has resigned on ac-

¹⁵ General Grant's headquarters were at Milliken's Bend. Other generals in command of troops in the area included G. W. Morgan, A. J. Smith, Frederick Steele, and M. L. Smith.

count of the dissatisfaction of most of his officers with his retreat from Murfreesboro. Gen. Joseph Johnston is now in command. It seems a pity for an old soldier like Bragg to have no force under him.

March 15: For the last two days we have been in a quiver of anxiety looking for the Yankees every minute, sitting on the front gallery with our eyes strained in the direction they will come, going to bed late and getting up early so they will not find us asleep. Today as it is raining, they are apt to remain in camp, and so we have a little relief. Friday they were at Mr. Graves', Mr. McPherson's, and Mr. Hardison's. Mr. Graves has a protection letter, and we did not hear how they fared. At Mr. McPherson's they took two horses and all the chickens, eggs, and butter in sight. They ordered dinner cooked and sat in the dining room and ate it. Only two men came to Mr. Hardison's, but they were ruffians, tough and impudent. They searched through everything for money or jewelry I suppose but found none and went off cursing and threatening another visit. Sister and I happened to go up on a little call soon after the men left and found everybody as mad as could be and feeling so helpless. Caroline, her favorite servant, and one of the Negro men went off the night before.

Yesterday afternoon Mr. Valentine was here, and we were all conversing quietly enough when the frantic barking of the dogs called us to the front gallery just in time to see a party of Yankees and three Negroes passing on the gin ridge. They turned and took a deliberate survey of the place and then went on. They were loaded with chickens, eggs, and such plunder and were guided by one of Mr. Valentine's Negroes, who had run off some time ago, and had two more to carry the stuff they had stolen.

So far our Negroes¹⁶ have shown no disposition to leave but may at any minute. They were hidden out for a day or so, but of course that could not be kept up with a Yankee camp as near as Winn Forest. The fields as far as we can

¹⁶ The house servants plus a few others. Kate previously stated that thirty were left behind when her brother moved the field hands inland.

see are sheets of green and gold, the weeds are growing unchecked, and the yellow-top makes a brave show.

We have all been busy this week trying to make "auld claes look arnaist as well as new," a tiresome and hopeless job.

March 17: Mr. Curry, who is only home for the day, and Mr. Hardison came over yesterday to give us the news. Gen. Van Dorn has attacked the enemy at Franklin, Tenn., killed 1,000, and captured the other two or three thousand, with heavy loss on our side.¹⁷ Of course it makes us very anxious for the boys and Dr. Buckner. My dear little brothers, God bless them.

Gen. Bragg is said to be in command at Vicksburg. His fame must now fall or stand with the city. Lincoln, it is reported, has been appointed a kind of military dictator with unlimited command of men and money. The Conscription Act has been passed and will be strictly enforced.¹⁸ That, with the abolishment of all state lines (if that be true), must make the war unpopular with the masses of the people. But the acts of Congress show that the rulers, at least, are not tired of the strife, and peace, blessed peace, seems farther off than ever.

Mr. Curry is just back from the other side of the Macon. He says the men over there will not fight. I wish we could swap them off for some of our Virginia or Tennessee men.

The Yankees, who went to Mr. Valentine's the last time he was here, broke open his trunks and took all his clothes and valuable papers. How forlorn he must be there all alone on Oasis. Mr. Curry says that Jane and her two children were drowned while crossing the break. A short space of freedom for them.

The plums and sassafras are in full bloom and the whole yard is fragrant. We all drank sassafras tea for awhile but soon got tired of it, pretty and pink as it is. Okra coffee is now the favorite drink. Mamma had several bushels of

¹⁷ Franklin, Tenn., March 9, 1863

¹⁸ The Federal Congress passed a conscription act early in March, 1863.—J. G. Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* (Boston, 1937), 410. The report concerning Bragg was untrue.

the seed saved. After experimenting with parched potatoes, parched pindars, burned meal, roasted acorns, all our coffee drinkers decided on okra seed as the best substitute. We have grown quite expert making shoes for ourselves. We cut up an old pair of gaiters and slippers for a pattern. We make the uppers of broadcloth, velvet, or any strong black goods we can get, and the shoemaker for the Negroes puts on the soles. They are not to say elegant looking but we are delighted to be able to make them, and they are far better than bare feet.¹⁹

March 20: We have wakened three mornings to the booming of cannon and have gone to sleep to the same music, but we have not heard what they are doing. Sometimes we hear the beating of drums, supposedly at Omega. We are too near "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war" to find it pleasant. No Yankees in this section since Saturday. Perhaps the troops have been concentrated at Vicksburg. The Yankees who passed through the place discussed stopping to raid the house, but the captain with them said, as there were only ladies and children here, they would let us alone. We did not know a Yankee could have so much chivalry. Hope it will develop in the other raiding bands.

The two Mrs. Richardsons and Mrs. Spain [?] went out to camp to get letters of protection. The general gave a letter to Mrs. Spain, as she was a widow, but refused letters to the others unless their husbands or brothers would come out and take the oath. Mr. A. Richardson started the next day to swear allegiance but was dissuaded by a friend. Miss W. Richardson went to the boat with her mother and came back boasting that she had caught a Yankee beau. Imagine any girl falling so low. No other girl in the country would acknowledge having even a Yankee acquaintance. Mrs. Graves' papers did not prove a perfect safeguard as a squad took all their good horses.

¹⁹ Massy, *Ersatz in the Confederacy*, 80-81, says that shortage of shoes was the worst clothing problem of the Confederacy. Shoes were made from old leather, preferably prewar because it was longer wearing. Leather furniture, saddles, belts, gin-bands, and trunks were used in the manufacture of shoes.

Mamma, Mr. Hardison, Mr. Valentine, and Mr. Jeffries seem to be the only people left in the country who have not applied for protection. We hope we shall never be so pressed as to be forced to ask a favor of a Yankee.

March 22: We have had an exciting time since the last date. Two Yankees came out Friday guided by John Graves and carried off my horse Wonka in spite of all we could do.

Wonka was racing around the yard, glad to be at liberty after being tied out so long, when two most villainous-looking Yankees rode up to the gallery where we three ladies and the two children were standing. They had pistols in their hands and proposed a "swap," but we all refused of course and begged them not to take the horse. Mamma even offered to pay the price for him, but the greatest villain of the two refused bluntly and worked himself into a towering rage while the other, the smooth villain, galloped off to catch the horse. I called to one of the Negroes to open the gate, thinking it would give Wonka a chance to escape, but as they seemed afraid I ran to do it myself. When the wretch called to me impudently to stop, I did not notice him but threw the gate open. He then dashed up with the pistol pointed at my head (I thought I had never seen such bright caps) and demanded in the most insolent tone how I dared to open a gate when he ordered it shut. I looked at him and ran on to open the other gate. Just then Mamma called to me that they had caught the horse, and as I turned to go in the house the man cursed and said, "I had just as soon kill you as a hoppergrass." I was not frightened but I was furiously angry and would have been glad to have seen him lying dead. And I never saw Mamma so angry. Aunt Laura took it more calmly, and the little girls were frightened. Johnny was sick with fever. In five minutes the man had changed saddles and was riding my prancing, beautiful pet gaily off, leaving in his place a pack of animated bones, covered with sorrel skin. Some one said it was an old horse taken from Mr. Noland.

I cried the rest of the day and half of the night. We had had the horse tied out in the cane for days, and not ten

minutes before the men came, Webster brought him up and said that he would die if he was kept tied up where the mosquitoes could get to him any longer. So I told Webster to turn him in the yard and went out to see, and I never saw him look finer. At that moment the Negroes called from the kitchen that the Yankees were coming, and in a minute they were dashing up to the gallery and in ten minutes more were racing away on my horse.

I think I will never see lilac blooms again without recalling this sad incident. We had all just come in from the garden and had great sprays of the purple flowers in our hands and stuck in the children's hats, and when the Yankees rode away and the excitement subsided we were still holding the tossing, fragrant plumes. This is the third time these same two wretches have been plundering out here. They were of the party that took Mr. Valentine and robbed Mr. Hardison and Mr. McPherson. Friday is the day they come. That must be their furlough time.

The Negroes all behaved very well while the men were here. Most of them hid, and the others did not show the slightest disposition to go with them, though the Yankees asked them to go. They made William help catch the horse by cursing and holding a pistol to his head, and then invited him to go along with them to camp. He refused most positively, and they rode off without doing any further damage. These two returned by way of Mrs. Hardison's, stopping to have a long talk with her Negroes, and took one of her mules, crossing just below the house. The effect of their talk with Mr. Hardison's Negroes came out today when six of the men with their children and clothes walked off in broad daylight after a terrible row, using the most abusive language to Mrs. Hardison. Mr. Hardison expected to get home today and move them all to Monroe, but he has waited too long. The other Negroes declare they are free and will leave as soon as they get ready. Mrs. Hardison sent for Johnny and Mr. McPherson early this morning. Johnny went at once but they could do nothing. None of them have even a gun. A Negro has stolen Mr. Hardison's. But guns are of no use to

people in our dilemma. To use one would only be to invite complete destruction from the soldiers.

The river is rising rapidly, and the levee at Lake Providence has been cut. It looks like we are going to be overflowed, a misfortune that we will welcome if it drives the Yankees away. No effort is made to hold the levees; in fact, they spoke of cutting the one at Pecan Grove before the Yankees came up, and it is a pity they did not. A few feet more of water would be a protection as the Yankees would not be able to come out in boats.

This country is in a deplorable state. The outrages of the Yankees and Negroes are enough to frighten one to death. The sword of Damocles in a hundred forms is suspended over us, and there is no escape. The water hems us in. The Negroes on Mrs. Stevens', Mr. Conley's, Mr. Catlin's, and Mr. Evans' places ran off to camp and returned with squads of soldiers and wagons and moved off every portable thing—furniture, provisions, etc., etc. A great many of the Negroes camped at Lake Providence have been armed by the officers, and they are a dreadful menace to the few remaining citizens. The country seems possessed by demons, black and white.²⁰

March 24: Storms and rain for two days. There has been almost constant rain since Christmas. The oldest inhabitants say they never saw such persistent rains. It might be the rainy season of the tropics. Some think the cannonading at Vicksburg brings on the rains. It is seldom we hear the cannon that it is not succeeded by showers or a downpour, and often it is difficult to distinguish between the burst of thunder and the roar of the guns.

The firing has been kept up, now fast then slow, for several days until today there is quiet. The sound comes over the water with such distinctness as to rattle the windows, and when the river is low we scarcely hear the guns.

Johnny brought us news Sunday. (Sunday does not seem

²⁰ With so many troops in the area, the foraging for food and horses went on constantly, no matter what the orders were. Federal soldiers used runaway Negroes to guide them to plantations and sometimes gave them guns.

like Sunday nowadays. It's always the time of the greatest excitement.) He said that Mrs. Graves was going Monday to see the Yankee general and would try to get my horse returned. That we know is a hopeless job, but we wrote asking her to report the behavior of the two men, giving the names they gave us and telling of their frequent raids out this way. Mrs. Hardison also wrote asking her to represent to the commanding general that there are only women and children in these homes, and, if he will allow marauding parties to continue to harass us, at least to send an officer in charge. Mrs. Graves says that the pickets are very strict now and that it is hard to get through the lines. The Graves have lost twenty of their Negroes. The letters of protection do them no good. Mrs. Hardison's servants have behaved worse than anyone's. They have done everything but strike her and have used very abusive language. The leader is a boy or man, Charles, who ran to the Yankees among the first and soon returned to stay at home. He said he had enough of Yankees.

The life we are leading now is a miserable, frightened one—living in constant dread of great danger, not knowing what form it may take, and utterly helpless to protect ourselves. It is a painful present and a dark future with the wearing anxiety and suspense about our loved ones. We long for news from the outside world, and yet we shudder to think what evil tidings it may bring us. Could we hear that all our soldiers are well, the troubles here at home would seem but light ones.

We beguile the time sewing and reading well-thumbed books, starting at every sound, and in the evening play backgammon or chess. Aunt Laura has just learned backgammon and enjoys playing a game. Little Sister has third-day chills and looks thin and pale. It seems impossible to break them without quinine, and we can get none.²¹ Johnny is at last

²¹ The shortage of quinine, the only means of controlling malaria, was indeed painful. Since the South imported its medical supplies, not only for the army but for civilians as well, the supply was soon exhausted after the blockade became effective.

almost well. Beverly's hair has been cut short and she looks like a pretty little boy and is delighted with her appearance.

So my and My Brother's old friend, Joe Wicks, is dead. And he died, as a Southern boy should, leading his men in action. He was adjutant of a Tennessee regiment and was killed in a skirmish near Oxford months ago. What a host of pleasant memories his name awakens—of the happy Clinton days when I was a little girl of twelve off at school for the first time, with My Brother as protector and comforter, and Joe my first little lover. What a gay, guileless time we all had together, boarding there with his sister, Mrs. Rhodes. "Green be the grass above thee, friend of my early years."

[Anchorage, La.]²² *April 10*: Brother Walter died February 15, 1863, at Cotton Gin, Miss. Again has God smitten us, and this last trouble is almost more than we can bear. I can hardly believe that our bright, merry little Brother Walter has been dead for seven weeks. And we cannot realize that he is gone forevermore. Even peace will not restore him to us all. It is hard, hard that he should have to go, so full of life and happiness and with such promise of a noble manhood. We were always so proud of our six stalwart boys, and again one is snatched away and we cannot think of them without tears. O Father, "Thou has promised Thou wilt not always chide, neither wilt Thou keep Thine anger forever. Have Mercy upon us, O Father, and spare Thou those who are left."

For seven long weeks my dear little brother has been sleeping in his lonely grave, far from all who loved him, and we knew it not until a few days ago. Even as I write, I feel his tears on my cheek and see him as I saw him last when I bade him good-bye in Vicksburg, reining his horse on the summit of the hill and turning with flushed cheeks and tear-

²² Anchorage, one of Dr. Carson's plantations, was located on Joe's Bayou in the western part of Madison Parish, about twenty miles inland from the Mississippi. The flight of the Stone family from Brokenburn on March 25 (as will subsequently be related) was indeed timely, for on March 29 McClelland's corps of four divisions started across the parish to New Carthage. A skirmish with a small Confederate force occurred at Richmond.—*Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, I, 388.

ful eyes to wave me a last farewell. And by the side of this picture is another that has haunted me ever since reading that fatal letter: I see him lying cold and still, dressed in black, in his plain black coffin. His slender hands are worn and brown with the toil of the last four months and are crossed on his quiet breast. His handsome clear-cut features are glaring cold and white, and the white lids are drawn down over the splendid grey eyes, so easy to fill with tears or brighten with laughter. The smile we knew so well is resting on his lips. Happy boy, free from the toil and turmoil of life, safe in the morning of life in a glorious immortality.

It breaks our hearts to think of him sick and dying among strangers, a Negro's face the only familiar one near him. I can hear him asking so eagerly, "Has Brother Coley come?" They say he longed so to see him, and he had been dead two weeks before Brother Coley knew it. All we know of his death is from a letter of Brother Coley's written on the sixteenth of March, the day Van Dorn's cavalry left Arkalona for the raid into Tennessee. Brother Walter had fever but he rode all day. The next morning he still suffered with fever, and he and two other soldiers of his company were left at the house of Mrs. Owens near Cotton Gin, a little town in north Mississippi. Pompey, Joe Carson's boy, was left to wait on him. The next morning the other two soldiers were well enough to follow on, and they carried a note from Mrs. Owens telling Brother Coley that his brother was very sick and that he had better return. He did not get the note for two weeks. Brother Walter had developed a severe case of pneumonia, and on the fifth evening, February 15 at 3 o'clock, he passed away with no friend but Pompey near him. It wrings my heart to think of him suffering and alone. I hope he did not realize that Death was so near and all he loved so far away. Poor little fellow, he was not used to strangers. He has been surrounded by loved and familiar faces all his short life. He was eighteen in December and died in February. He was but a boy and could not stand the hardships of a soldier's life. Four months of it killed him.

We have no likeness of him. He has left only a memory and a name.

*He will come not back though all be won,
Whose young heart beat so high.*

[Anchorage, La.] April 15: Tomorrow at daybreak we leave here on our way to Monroe [La.].²³ This has been but a resting place on our journey to the unknown. At Mr. Templeton's on Bayou Macon, we will take a flat for Delhi where we will take the cars for Monroe. We hope to reach there sometime during the night. Jimmy has secured two rooms for us at a Mr. Deane's in the hills four miles from Monroe, across the Ouachita. These are Mamma's plans if she can carry them through, but everything is uncertain from the getting of the flat to the rent of the rooms. No plans are fixed in these troublesome times. First come, first served is the motto. Engagements stand for nothing.

But we must certainly leave here, as we have trespassed on these kind friends for two weeks. Now, they are preparing to move on themselves, and we would surely be in the way. They have been exceedingly kind. No relatives could have been kinder, and Dr. Carson even wants to send us down to Delhi in one of his skiffs, a trip of two days. He is in all the hurry and bustle of moving not only his own family but several hundred Negroes, his own and those belonging to the large Bailey estate, for which he is executor. The more I see of Dr. Carson the more I am impressed with the beauty and nobility of his character. He has a tremendous undertaking before him, so many women and children to be moved and sheltered, and he feels deeply the responsibility. Mamma will not take advantage of his kindness about the skiff. We will get down the Macon from Col. Templeton's some-way. Mrs. Carson has given Sister a complete suit of Katie's clothes, as Sister, in our escape from home, got off with only the clothes she had on. She and Katie are the same size, and the clothes fit nicely. She has also given me a pair of nice gaiters such as it would be impossible to buy in the Con-

²³ The parish seat of Ouachita Parish, about eighty miles inland from the Mississippi.

federacy. As I have only a pair of old half-worn shoes and can get no more, they are most acceptable. Mamma will get mourning for Sister in Monroe, if possible. We feel that black should be our only wear.

Mrs. Carson and the children will follow us to Monroe in a few days, and we have all planned to go out to Texas together, camping out. "Times change and men change with them"—trite but true. A year ago would we have thought of receiving, or of a friend offering, clothes as a present? Now we are as pleased to receive a half-worn garment from a friend as the veriest beggar that goes from door to door. How else shall we cover our nakedness? We have lost all and as yet can buy nothing. A year ago would we have thought of going even to the house of a friend to spend some time without an invitation? And tomorrow we are all going—seven of us²⁴ with bag and baggage (very little of that, though)—to stay an indefinite time with a lady we have seen only once, and without any invitation, trusting only that, as she is a lady, she will be kind to us in our distress. We are going to Col. Templeton's to wait there until we can get transportation down the Macon. Mrs. Templeton called on us last week here.

Before leaving here, we wrote to our two boys and Uncle Bo. My heart was too full for a careless letter. I could only think of Brother Walter. But we know how anxious they are about us all, and writing is all we can do for them. So we wrote as cheerfully as we could. We would not add to their hardships. Brother Coley wrote that they were doing as hard service as was possible for men. And my heart aches for the delicate young fellow, trying his strength to the utmost. He seems almost as far from us as Brother Walter, and I have almost as little hope of seeing him again. Not a word from My Brother since he left.

I have had no heart to write of our horrid flight from home but will some day when anchored somewhere.

²⁴ Mamma, Little Sister, Kate, Jimmy, Johnny, Aunt Laura, and Beverley.

[Near Monroe, La.] April 21: ²⁵ We have reached this place of refuge three weeks after deserting our home. We have come by short but not easy stages. Wednesday we left Dr. Carson's Anchorage place at sunrise, going in skiffs to Mr. Templeton's only a few miles and hoping to catch Mr. Gaddis' boat. The boat had gone on, and Mr. and Mrs. Templeton begged us to stay with them until Friday, when the boat would make another trip. We were only too glad to do so. There was absolutely nothing else we could do. The whole country is a sheet of water from the levees being down in every direction. There is not a skiff to be borrowed or bought at any price. The whole family, consisting of Col. and Mrs. Templeton and their two half-grown daughters, Mary and Emma, were as kind as possible to us. They did all they could to help us on. We were sorry to tell the Carsons good-bye. They were so kind, but we hope to meet them very soon. Col. Templeton's is a pleasant home. It is a long, low house with a large yard, shaded with forest trees, cool, green and homelike. It is comfortable within but with no pretensions. They set an excellent table and have a well-filled larder. Most pleasant of all to storm-tossed wanderers was a warm welcome. The only thing I did not like, my bedfellow was a "Yankee school marm." She professed to be a true Southerner in feeling, but when she knelt to pray I could not help speculating whether her petitions were for our success or the success of our enemies.²⁶ Emma Templeton is a little beauty, a dimpled blonde. Mary is a tall, pale, dark-eyed girl. Both of them are idolized by their parents. Mr. Hornwasher is their music and drawing teacher. He did not join the army. He had enough of war in his own country, no doubt.

Friday we came down to Delhi in an immense dugout, a

²⁵ On April 20 the Federal Army moved across Madison Parish to a point below Vicksburg, preparatory to crossing to the east bank of the Mississippi.—*Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, I, 390-92.

²⁶ Northern school teachers had been in the area from the earliest settlements. Miss Caroline B. Poole, Massachusetts school teacher, came to Monroe in 1836 as governess for a planter's children, and her diary gives a graphic account of conditions in the area.—Williamson, *Northeast Louisiana*, 183-84.

trip of six hours. All seven of us, Mamma, Aunt Laura, Sister, Beverly, I, and the two boys, with an assorted cargo of corn, bacon, hams, Negroes, their baggage, dogs and cats, two or three men, and our scant baggage. It was a dreadful trip. We were very crowded, the hot sun beaming on us as we were creeping down the bayou, hungry and tired. There was a very strong reflection from the water, and one of our poor Negroes was sick, groaning most of the way, and could not be made comfortable. We were glad enough to get out at the railroad bridge and walk the mile to reach Delhi.

The scene there beggars description: such crowds of Negroes of all ages and sizes, wagons, mules, horses, dogs, baggage, and furniture of every description, very little of it packed. It was just thrown in promiscuous heaps—pianos, tables, chairs, rosewood sofas, wardrobes, parlor sets, with pots, kettles, stoves, beds and bedding, bowls and pitchers, and everything of the kind just thrown pell-mell here and there, with soldiers, drunk and sober, combing over it all, shouting and laughing. While thronging everywhere were refugees—men, women, and children—everybody and everything trying to get on the cars, all fleeing from the Yankees or worse still, the Negroes.

All have lost heavily, some with princely estates and hundreds of Negroes, escaping with ten or twenty of their hands and only the clothes they have on. Others brought out clothes and household effects but no Negroes, and still others sacrificed everything to run their Negroes to a place of safety.

Everybody was animated and excited. All had their own tales to tell of the Yankee insolence and oppression and their hairbreadth escapes. All were eager to tell their own stories of hardship and contrivance, and everybody sympathized with everybody else. All were willing to lend a helping hand and to give advice to anybody on any subject. Nearly everybody took his trials cheerfully, making a joke of them, and nearly all are bound for Texas. Nobody "crying over spilled milk." Not a tear all day, though one knows there were heavy hearts bravely borne.

We got off from Delhi about sunset and reached Monroe

after twelve. Nearly all remained on the cars until daylight, as it was impossible to get accommodations in town. It was amusing to watch the people wake up in the morning, wash their faces, smooth at their hair, and go to eating breakfast as leisurely and with as much *sang-froid* as though in their breakfast rooms at home. Everyone traveling on the cars now carries his own provisions, as you can get nothing if you do not, and no room if you get off.

We and the Lowry family were the last to leave the cars. Jimmy arranged his affairs, and about eleven when we were all thoroughly worn out we set off in a four-horse stage. We drove through Monroe, which seems to be a beautiful little town, but I was suffering with fever too much to like anything. The road up the Ouachita was lovely. It is a clear bright stream with forest shaded banks. The hard dry road was appreciated after the mud and water of the last months. The profusion of catalpa trees, all in full bloom, lining the streets of Monroe was indescribably fair in the early morning light. The deep green leaves seemed heaped with pyramids of snow. We never thought the catalpa could be so pretty.

We crossed the river at Trenton on a flat and came out two miles in the hills to this place, Mr. Deane's, but we hope to be here only a few days. The woods around here are beautiful with quantities of wild flowers and fruits. I have been sick in bed until today.

Yesterday Mamma and Jimmy went back to Delhi to get a party of soldiers to go back home with Jimmy and bring out the Negroes left there. All our and Aunt Laura's house servants, the most valuable we own, were left. She returned today, having succeeded in getting the soldiers, and the party with Jimmy as guide will leave this morning. We shall be very anxious until Jimmy returns as it is a most hazardous undertaking. Mamma did not realize the great danger until her return on the train. Some of the gentlemen were speaking of its hardihood, and fear if those of the party are captured they may be hanged as spies. She is very much alarmed.

We hear that the Negroes are still on the place, but the

furniture and all movables have been carried out to camp by the Yankees. The Negroes quarreled over the division of our clothes. I have barely a change and the others have but little more. Our beds are all in the quarters. Webster, our most trusted servant, claims the plantation as his own and is renowned as the greatest villain in the country.

If we succeed in getting the Negroes we may say farewell to the buildings as no doubt they will be burned, but that may happen at any time. Mrs. Barr's and Maj. Haywood's homes have gone up in smoke.

[Near Trenton, La.]²⁷ *April 24*: We have been here nearly a week, and I am still in bed. I hope to miss the fever tonight and get up in the morning. This is surely no time to be sick. Mamma, Aunt Laura, Sister, Beverly, and I with Beverly's nurse, little Annie, are all occupying one room and not a large one at that. The other small room, furnished only with a single bed and a bad smell, belongs to Jimmy and Johnny. As neither of them are here we might have divided forces, but it looks too uninviting to risk. The room we are in has necessary furniture but looks so dirty and dusty. There are no clean things for the beds and few towels and bathing facilities. Should Jimmy get any of the house servants, we will certainly have it all overhauled, and such a washing of bed clothes there will be. Not a book or paper in the house. Being sick has kept me from dying with ennui. The fare is coarse and so commonly served. I have bread and milk three times a day but no butter. The others have come down to the stern realities of life and really seem to enjoy sassafras tea, coarse cornbread, and fat bacon. I am nearly starved.

Mrs. Deane seems a good, obliging kind of woman, quiet and industrious and with a great contempt for Mr. Deane, who is an habitual drunkard. There are several little children, not the cleanest in the world. Altogether things are so uncomfortable that we will try to change as soon as possible.

²⁷ An important shipping point on the Ouachita River, about two miles from Monroe.

Mamina went this morning to try to get board for us at Dr. Young's a few miles farther on. We hear that a force 20,000 strong have taken the St. Mary salt works and are marching in on Alexandria,²⁸ which is most lamentable news for us and the country if true. If Alexandria is taken, they will certainly take the salt works on this side where all our Negroes are. Then, what will become of us? We will be absolutely destitute.

Little Sister is the only one who adapts herself readily to circumstances. She is cheerful and happy and quite at home. She and Mrs. Deane are great friends, and she keeps busy most of the time, an amelioration of our lot.

The May haws are ripening and all say they are delicious stewed with sugar. I have not been well enough to try them.

[Near Trenton, La.] *April 25*: We see that Van Dorn has had another fight and been repulsed. We can only hope Brother Coley and Dr. Buckner are safe. We will not hear for many days. Affairs look dark for our Confederacy just now.

This country is filled with refugees. Nearly all our friends are back here or on their way to Texas, where we hope to be before long. Out here the prices asked for everything are enormous. The people of Monroe seem determined to fleece the refugees. It cost us \$3,000 to get a four-horse hack to bring us from Monroe here—four miles.²⁹

Having no other way of amusing myself, I may as well write the account of our flight from home [Brokenburn] and our subsequent adventures.

On Thursday, March 26, hearing that Mr. Hardison had returned from Monroe, Sister and I walked up in the afternoon to hear what news he had brought. As we approached

²⁸ Federal General N. P. Banks had moved toward Vicksburg from New Orleans to assist in the siege. Finding Port Hudson still in Confederate hands, he attempted to bypass it by way of the Atchafalaya and Red rivers. He encountered General Taylor's small force near Franklin and forced him to retreat north. Banks then started for Alexandria, La.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 586–93.

²⁹ The rate of exchange at this time was about four Confederate dollars for one gold dollar.

the house, it struck me that something was wrong. As we were going through the garden George Richards came out and told us a party of Yankees and armed Negroes had just left, carrying with them every Negro on the place, most of Mrs. Hardison's and the children's clothes, and all the provisions they could manage. They were led by Charles, Mr. Hardison's most trusted servant, and they were all vowing vengeance against Mr. Hardison. They said they would shoot him on sight for moving two of his Negroes a few days before. Mr. Hardison had fortunately seen them coming and, knowing he would be arrested or perhaps killed as a conscript officer, had escaped to the woods.

We walked in and found Mrs. Hardison and the children all much excited and very angry, with flaming cheeks and flashing eyes. The Negroes had been very impertinent. The first armed Negroes they had ever seen. Just as we were seated someone called out the Yankees were coming again. It was too late to run. All we could do was to shut ourselves up together in one room, hoping they would not come in. George Richards was on the gallery. In a minute we heard the gate open and shut, rough hoarse voices, a volley of oaths, and then a cry, "Shoot him, curse him! Shoot him! Get out of the way so I can get him." Looking out of the window, we saw three fiendish-looking, black Negroes standing around George Richards, two with their guns leveled and almost touching his breast. He was deathly pale but did not move. We thought he would be killed instantly, and I shut my eyes that I might not see it. But after a few words from George, which we could not hear, and another volley of curses, they lowered their guns and rushed into the house "to look for guns" they said, but only to rob and terrorize us. The Negroes were completely armed and there was no white man with them. We heard them ranging all through the house, cursing and laughing, and breaking things open.

Directly one came bursting into our room, a big black wretch, with the most insolent swagger, talking all the time in a most insulting manner. He went through all the drawers

and wardrobe taking anything he fancied, all the time with a cocked pistol in his hand. Cursing and making the most awful threats against Mr. Hardison if they ever caught him, he lounged up to the bed where the baby was sleeping. Raising the bar, he started to take the child, saying as he waved the pistol, "I ought to kill him. He may grow up to be a jarilla." Kill him." Mrs. Hardison sprang to his side, snatched the baby up, and shrieked, "Don't kill my baby. Don't kill him." The Negro turned away with a laugh and came over where I was sitting with Little Sister crouched close to me holding my hand. He came right up to us standing on the hem of my dress while he looked me slowly over, gesticulating and snapping his pistol. He stood there about a minute, I suppose. It seemed to me an age. I felt like I would die should he touch me. I did not look up or move, and Little Sister was as still as if petrified. In an instant more he turned away with a most diabolical laugh, gathered up his plunder, and went out. I was never so frightened in my life. Mrs. Hardison said we were both as white as marble, and she was sure I would faint. What a wave of thankfulness swept over us when he went out and slammed the door. In the meanwhile, the other Negroes were rummaging the house, ransacking it from top to bottom, destroying all the provisions they could not carry away, and sprinkling a white powder into the cisterns and over everything they left. We never knew whether it was poison or not.

The Negroes called and stormed and cursed through the house, calling each other "Captain" and "Lieutenant" until it nearly froze the blood in our veins, and every minute we expected them to break into our room again. I was completely unnerved. I did not think I could feel so frightened.

Mrs. Alexander went into her room hoping to prevent their robbing her bed, when one of them pointed his pistol at her and said, "I told you once before, old woman, to keep out of here and stop your jaw." Mr. McPherson and George were all the time on the gallery with Negroes guarding them with leveled guns.

After carrying on this way about two hours they lit matches, stuck them about the hall, and then leisurely took themselves off, loaded down with booty. We rushed around, put out all the matches, gathered up the few little articles left, and started at once for home. Since the Negroes declared as they moved off that they were coming back in a little while and burn every house on the place, I took the baby and Mrs. Hardison, Mrs. Alexander, and the children with George and Mr. McPherson gathered up everything of any value left, and we hurried home, reaching there spent with excitement. Mrs. Hardison was almost crazy.

As we passed through our quarters, there were numbers of strange Negro men standing around. They had gathered from the neighboring places. They did not say anything, but they looked at us and grinned and that terrified us more and more. It held such a promise of evil. Jimmy went out at once to where Mr. Hardison was in hiding to tell him his family were with us. Jimmy just escaped being shot by Mr. Hardison, who, in the dusk, took him for a Yankee. Mr. and Mrs. Hardison and the small children went off as soon as possible, not thinking it safe to remain so near home. During the night a party came to the yard looking for them, but on the house servants' assuring them that the Hardisons were gone, they did not come to the house.

We made preparations that night to move at daybreak, but something deterred us. Mamma thought she would go out and get letters of protection but later abandoned the idea. It was then too late for us to get off, and we spent a night and day of terror. The next evening the Negroes from all the inhabited places around commenced flocking to Mr. Hardison's, and they completely sacked the place in broad daylight, passing our gate loaded down with plunder until twelve at night. That more than anything else frightened Mamma and determined her to leave, though at the sacrifice of everything we owned.

We made arrangements to get Dr. Carson's skiffs and sent Webster around collecting saddles and bridles. On account of the water we could go only on horseback to take the skiffs.

With much difficulty we got everything ready for the start at midnight. Aunt Laura was the only one who did not want to go. She begged Mamma to let her and Beverly stay, saying that she would get old Mr. Valentine to stay with her, but of course Mamma could not allow that. The boys brought in everything we had buried out, except Aunt Laura's silver. That had to be left packed in a barrel and buried in the yard. The boys had done it one very dark night, when they hoped all the Negroes were in their cabins as it was raining. All the servants behaved well enough except Webster, but you could see it was only because they knew we would soon be gone. We were only on sufferance.

Two days longer and we think they would all have gone to the Yankees, most probably robbing and insulting us before they left. About eleven the boys went off with their guns to have the horses saddled and brought up. After a good deal of trouble, they came. The boys carried their guns all the time.⁸¹ Without them I think we would never have gotten off. Webster tried every artifice to get hold of one of them, but the boys never relaxed their watch. The night was cloudy and dark with occasional claps of thunder, but we had to go then or never. We knew the news would be carried to camp, and the Yankees had forbidden citizens to leave their places. Aunt Laura, protesting all the time she could not ride, was at last after much coaxing and fixing mounted on poor Little Jack Fisher, the family pony, old and gentle, with Annie perched behind her. I took Beverly in my lap. All the others mounted, and with the baggage cart with Uncle Bob driving and Jimmy guarding it in the extreme rear, the procession moved off.

It was too dark to see the road but Johnny led off, and each one followed the shadow in front. At first Aunt Laura was loud in exclamation and complaint, until someone suggested that she would bring the Negroes down on us. That acted as a quietus, and thereafter she groaned only in spirit. Several times as the clouds lifted and it grew something lighter, I saw her pony struggling in a mud hole and Aunt

⁸¹ Jimmy was about sixteen years old, Johnny about fifteen.

Laura reeling in the saddle, but not a scream disturbed the stillness of the night. As we opened gates and rode through place after place in perfect silence, not a light was visible anywhere. After passing Out Post, the road was so bad and it was so dark that we were forced to wait for daylight. We dismounted in the middle of the road, and to Aunt Laura's surprise and amazement Mamma lay her head down in Johnny's lap and went sound asleep. Riding in the dark made her sick, and she was worn out with excitement and loss of sleep.

As soon as it was light enough to see, the sleepers were awakened, and we mounted and went on over the very worst road it was possible for ladies to travel—just a long bog from one end to the other. The morning air was pleasantly cool, and as the red light crept up the sky we heard all kinds of wildwoods sounds—squirrels chattering in the trees, birds waking with a song, the calls of the wild ducks and turkeys, and three or four deer bounding into the woods just before us.

When we reached within a mile of our place of debarkation, the road became impassable, and we struck off into the woods. The cart had to be left there and the baggage carried on by mules. After much trouble, getting lost and riding through water up to our saddle skirts—I actually swam a bayou with Beverly in my arms—we succeeded in getting all of our party and a little of our baggage to the landing place below Mrs. Stevens'. We sent Webster back to the cart for the baggage, and no sooner was he out of sight than he mounted a horse and set off for home. He told Charles that he knew he was not going to Bayou Macon with Miss Manda and that Charles had better come on with him. Thus by his treachery we lost almost everything we brought away with us, for when we heard it, it was already too late to send back for the things. We knew the Yankees would certainly be where we were by 8 o'clock, and it was nearly that hour. We knew that we must get off at once if at all, for when the Yankees came they would turn us back. They never allow anyone to leave if they can help it. Finish this another day.

[Near Trenton, La.] *April 26:* We have divided forces. Aunt Laura and Beverly with her nurse have gone to Dr. Young's, about four miles from here. He had promised to take us all and we had packed our few possessions and were waiting for the carriage that Dr. Young was to send, when a boy came with a note saying that Dr. Young found he had room for only two. Aunt Laura, who was half frantic to get away from here, went at once, Johnny going with her, all on horseback. Aunt Laura has gotten over her terror of horseback riding since her midnight ride and was willing to mount anything to get away.

Johnny came back yesterday from the salt works. Affairs are progressing favorably there. We hear that Jimmy had to abandon his scheme for making a dash into the lines and bringing out the hands. The water was too low. He is busy getting the mules over the Macon. We are relieved that he gave it up. It was too risky, even if feasible. There are vague rumors of approaching Yankees, and people are getting frightened. But we have been through too much to feel frightened at a mere rumor.

[Near Trenton, La.] *April 27:* Mamma and Johnny are out hunting up bed clothes and anything else buyable since we need everything, and Sister and I are left to ourselves this rainy day. So I may as well finish the recital of our woes.

We left our clothes in care of Uncle Bob who has been as faithful as any white man could be. He is Mamma's driver on the plantation. And we piled ourselves and our scanty luggage into two rocking, leaky dugouts and pushed off, Jimmy paddling one and Coffee, one of Dr. Carson's hands, the other. The sight of a body of horsemen in the distance coming our way lent strength to their arms, and as fast as they could ply the paddles we glided through the water. The men came on down the road, and we saw they were Yankee soldiers. But the water was so deep that they could not ride fast and we kept ahead. At last after nearly a mile of this race, the boats shot out into deep water, and we were safe from pursuit. Then what a shout rang out for Jeff Davis and the Confederacy. The men could see and hear us dis-

tinctly, and we half expected a volley to come whizzing over the waters. But the boys would not be restrained, and their "Farewell to the Feds!" "Hurrah for Jeff Davis!" and "Ho for Texas!" floated over the waters till we were out of sight. The Yankees followed us until their horses were nearly swimming.

After rowing a few miles, we joined Mr. Hardison and his family at the Jones place in the middle of Tensas swamp. They were in a skiff and had been waiting for us for some time. All his family and all his worldly possessions were in that skiff and it was not loaded, so quickly had he been reduced from affluence to poverty. We went on in company and were in the boats for seven hours in the beating rain and the sickening sun, sitting with our feet in the water. Not an inch of land was to be seen during the journey through the dense swamp and over the swift curling currents. The water was sometimes twenty feet deep, rushing and gurgling around the logs and trees. We all stood it very well except Aunt Laura. She was terrified nearly to death and was alternately laughing and crying. She insisted on giving the rower directions and, as he was a slow African, confused him so that he forgot how to pull and ran us into brush piles innumerable. At last he said, "Now, Mistress, you just tell me how to pull and I'll do it." So Aunt Laura and Mamma steered the boat *viva voce*, and he did the hard pulling. I thought they surely would make him turn us over, since a dugout goes over with such ease. At last we came to a clearing, and the boats had to be pulled over the land. We walked a path lined with brambles, and our dresses were nearly torn off. Johnny suffered with fever nearly all day.

As we were passing a Mr. Anderson's, heavy clouds rolled up, and it looked like a coming storm. Aunt Laura and Mrs. Hardison declared they would not go on but would stop right there, and so our boats were headed for the gallery. They were all under water since it was a little bit of a house, but we carried it by storm without a remonstrance from the owners, who were as kind as could be. Mamma and I were wet nearly to our waists, and the floor looked like it had been

scoured when we passed over it. But the dear little lady did not seem to mind it a bit. I had a great bag of Aunt Laura's gold around my waist. It was very heavy, and just as I stepped on the gallery the belt gave way and it came down with a crash. A foot nearer and it would have fallen in the water and I suppose we never would have found it. That evening Dr. Carson came to take us to his house but Aunt Laura felt too worn out to go. Mamma stayed with her, and Sister, the boys, and I went on with Dr. Carson. The next day the others joined us there. The whole family received us most kindly, and oh what a relief it was to get to a place of rest and to feel safe once more.

That night there was a most terrific storm which did not even waken me. I slept like the dead. I was completely exhausted by fatigue, excitement, and loss of sleep. Twice while the storm was raging, Mrs. Carson started to waken me, saying it was not right to let me sleep in such danger, but Dr. Carson would not let her. He told her that sleep was the one thing I needed. So thoughtful of him. Aunt Laura and Mamma said they were worse frightened by the storm than they had been by anything else. They had not had a brutal Negro man standing on their dress and fingering a pistol a few inches from their heads. I can stand anything but Negro and Yankee raiders. They terrify me out of my wits.

Had the storm come up while we were in those dugouts, few would have lived to tell the tale—they rocked like egg shells.

We spent nearly three weeks at Dr. Carson's most delightfully. Books, music, rest, and pleasant company charmed the hours away until came news of our great bereavement.

The Negroes at Dr. Carson's were almost as much demoralized as those on the river. The night after we reached there, a skiff load attempted to escape but were followed and captured after being fired on several times by Jimmy. Fortunately he did not hit any of them.

Now for a list of our losses. All the clothes left in the cart were taken by Mr. Catlin's Negroes, Uncle Bob being unable

to protect them. They comprised most of our underclothes and dresses, all my fine and pretty things, laces, etc., except one silk dress, all our likenesses, and all the little family treasures that we valued greatly. Little Sister did not get off with a change. Mrs. Carson kindly had a suit made for her. Mamma and I have barely a change and the boys have only what they have on. They lost theirs after getting them out here.

Aunt Laura has lost everything except barely enough to do with for a time. Beverly's things were mostly saved. Aunt Laura's trunk, packed with a quantity of beautiful clothes, laces, silks, velvets, and so on, was sent to Mr. Anthony's in the vain hope that it would be safe. We hear, however, that the Yankees, informed by Webster, went there, demanded Mrs. Buckner's trunk, took it to Grant's headquarters, and that is the last of it. Some say they just broke it open and divided up the spoils. Both Mamma and Aunt Laura have lost all their bedding, table linen, etc. Our house is stripped of furniture, carpets, books, piano, and everything else, the carriage, buggy, harness, and everything of that kind. Also they have thirty Negroes still on the place we shall probably never see again.

Mamma regrets coming away as she did, but what else could she do? We could not stand more than anyone else, and nearly everyone left before we did. Our mistake was in not moving everything in the fall. Charles and Annie were the only two Negroes who would come with us, and they are only half-grown. So passes the glory of the family.

[Near Monroe, La.] *May 2*: We have been comfortably domiciled here since Tuesday. It is indeed a delightful change from Mr. Deane's, that musty room and uneatable fare. This is a large roomy but unfurnished house, a kind, pleasant family, and excellent fare—an oasis in the desert. The mother, Mrs. Wadley, two grown daughters, a grown son, and two or three younger children make up the family at home. Col. Wadley is on the other side of the river. They are railroad people. Aunt Laura is boarding just across the road from us, and there is a young lady, Carrie Young, and

a grown son in that house. Then, there are quite a number of young people in walking distance. There is no dearth of company, but I cannot enjoy it. I feel out of place with a party of gay young people. Their mirth jars my heart. Life seems too sad a thing to spend in talking nonsense. I feel fifty years old.

The two Miss Dawsons from Madison Parish seem to be the belles of the country. They refueged out here some time ago and are enjoying themselves exceedingly. Their house is a favorite resort for the officers, and the girls are out riding and walking with some of them every day. Fannie Dawson is beautiful, accomplished, and fascinating, we hear.

Bad news from the Negroes at the salt works. Jeffrey is dead and several others are very sick. The three whose wives are on the river ran away but were caught. Mamma and Johnny with a new overseer and his wife started to the salt works yesterday. She will start all the Negroes who are able to travel at once to Texas. We will perhaps go to Homer [La.].

The news from Mississippi is bad. The Yankees are making raids through the state, cutting off supplies from Vicksburg. News of a Confederate victory at Charleston.⁸² The panic here has subsided though the authorities are still moving government stores from Monroe. We hear that Mrs. Amis' beautiful house has been burned. Emmett Amis is out here on furlough, flying around among the girls, but cannot get into the lines to see his mother and sister. They will be coming out now, I suppose.

I have been hard at work ever since coming here sewing on the goods Mamma bought from Mrs. Lowry. We need so many things that it is hard to decide what to make first. Mamma bought a lot of linen sheets from Mrs. Lowry, and I am making them into underclothes, thick and strong. They should last until the war is over.⁸³

⁸² On April 7, 1863, a Federal naval attack on Charleston, S. C., was repulsed.

⁸³ Prior to the war underwear was usually made from linen, fine cotton, or silk. When these were no longer available, sheets, pillow cases, and old garments were used. Women were reduced finally to using coarse homespun which was hot for summer wear.—Massey, *Ersatz in the Confederacy*, 94.

Mary Gustine and all her mother's family have gone to Camden, Ark., and the Lowrys will go on there this week.³⁴ Sorry we missed seeing each other on the way. When shall we meet again? A letter today from Mrs. Hardison. They and the Currys expect to move into this neighborhood in a few days. She writes gloomily of affairs on the river. The Graves and the Newmans are the only families left out there. Mr. Mat Johnson, after being beaten by his Negroes, has come out to Floyd with fifteen other men and is trying to raise a company. Horace Greeley's son was out at Mr. Curry's place on a stealing expedition last week. When reading the *Tribune* two years ago and abusing Greeley for his vile slanders of the South, we never thought any of his kith or kin would ever be that near Brokenburn. Such are the chances of war. We did not think any of Mr. Greeley's relations would be in the war. "He doth protest too much," though he does write of it as a Holy Crusade. Do you think it wicked to wish that one of our enemies may be killed as a punishment for his father's sins?³⁵

[Near Monroe, La.] *May 3*: We went to a real country church this morning, saw a country congregation, and heard a sermon to match. Loring Wadley made several trips with the buggy to get us all there, but two of the party rode back in Dr. Young's \$3,000 carriage. We had a pleasure today in a visit of several hours from Julia Street. She came down from Bastrop just for the day. She is more nearly depressed than I ever saw her.

Annie and Peggy got here from the salt works today and we are glad to have somebody to wait on us again. I expect we will keep them busy.

Gen. Van Dorn has made another attack on Franklin, Tenn. Joe Barr, in Col. Stark's regiment—the one that Dr. Buckner's company belongs to—was killed in the fight. As yet no news from our soldiers, and we are anxious all the time.

³⁴ Many Louisianians took refuge in Camden, Ark., which was accessible by steamboat on the Ouachita River.

³⁵ The report of a son of Horace Greeley's being in the Vicksburg area is apparently in error, for of Greeley's seven children only two daughters lived to maturity.—*Dictionary of American Biography*, VII, 528-29.

[Near Monroe, La.] *May 5*: Two days of busy sewing and reading *Hyperion*, which I like greatly.³⁶ Mrs. Carson with Mrs. Napitandi [?] Richardson and Miss Carrie Lowry with Miss Mary Compton came to see us today. Mrs. Carson's family are staying with the Richardsons on Bayou DeSaird until Dr. Carson gets his wagon train of Negroes started to Texas. The last affair at Franklin [Tenn.] seems to have been a drawn battle. If Brother Coley had been hurt, I think we would have heard it by this time. They had several items of news.

The gunboats are unable to pass Grand Gulf and are lying idle between Vicksburg and Grand Gulf, like baffled beasts of prey.³⁷

There is a great scarcity of provisions all through Mississippi. It is difficult to provision Vicksburg for a long siege. Mr. Mat Johnson has already forty men in his company. Dr. Dancy's house is still standing, and the Yankees have allowed Mrs. W. Scott to come out of the lines on a ten-day furlough.

We went yesterday to see Florence Pugh [?] (now Mrs. Morrison), an old schoolmate. The family are near here now on their way to Texas. She is a dear, sweet girl but looks dreadful. How marrying does change a body for the worse. She was a pretty girl a year ago, fresh and dainty. Now she is married and almost ugly.

I am busy every day trying to make up the cloth Mamma bought, but it is slow, tiresome work for one person with no sewing machine. The only things Mamma could find to buy belonged to the Lowrys, and they sold them at awful prices—\$60 for a pair of common blankets, \$50 for a pair of linen sheets, and everything else in proportion. They have sold much of their own clothing. Mamma bought some of Olivia's things for Sister. Jimmy is fitted out with a suit belonging

³⁶ The poem by John Keats (1795–1821).

³⁷ Grand Gulf was about thirty miles by land below Vicksburg. Because the Federal gunboats were unable to destroy the Confederate batteries at this point, Grant moved his army farther down the river and crossed at Bruinsburg, forcing the evacuation of Grand Gulf on May 3.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 566–67.

to a Mr. Mc-something, and I have two dresses and an embroidered skirt of Carrie Lowry's. It seems funny to be wearing other people's half-worn clothing, but it is all we can get. Mamma bought some Turkey-red calico at \$3 a yard for a dress for Sister.

[Near Monroe, La.] *May 10*: Mamma returned from the salt works on Friday, riding the whole distance on horseback.³⁸ It was dreadfully fatiguing for one who rides so little. She has gone this evening to Delhi to make another attempt to have the Negroes brought out, if she can get soldiers to go with Jimmy. Quite a number of Negroes have been brought out in that way recently, some from within the lines.

The news from the salt works is bad. Frank, my maid, and Dan both died of pneumonia and neglect, and three others are very ill. Poor Frank, I am sorry for her to go. She has been raised in the house with us.³⁹ With so much sickness among the Negroes, Mr. Smith has been unable to start to Texas. Mamma has bought a Jersey for us to travel in, but it is a weak-looking vehicle for that long trip.⁴⁰

Several thousand of our soldiers are now at Monroe under Maj. Gen. Walker. Two of the officers spent yesterday evening here and told us the whole command would get off this morning and that there were some splendid bands with the regiments. So this morning we rode out to the river opposite Monroe to see them off, starting before sunrise. We saw crowds of soldiers, talked to a number of them, and heard inspiring music.⁴¹ The ride all the way through the spring

³⁸ About sixty miles.

³⁹ The custom of providing each white child born on a plantation with a servant of approximately the same age, enabled the two children to grow up together. Such servants seldom did heavy work. Kate says that she was more than usually lenient with Frank; hence Frank was simply not prepared for such hard work.

⁴⁰ This vehicle which transported the Stones so many miles during the following years was a four-wheel hack without springs. The name probably derived from the fact that many buggies and similar vehicles were manufactured in New Jersey.

⁴¹ Moving from Pine Bluff, Ark., to the aid of General Taylor's forces in central Louisiana, General Walker's division arrived at Trenton on

woods was delightful. I sat up until twelve the night before fixing a sort of riding habit. A major and two privates have vowed vengeance against the 6th Mo. Regt. and "Mr. Corrigan" for my sake, should they ever meet in battle array.⁴² The troops after embarking received counter orders and are again in Monroe, expecting to march at any minute. There is another panic in Monroe. The Yankees are looked for at any time. They could not make anything out of this poor family. We have been too thoroughly plucked by the river Feds.

The abandoned river places are being cultivated by the Yankees. Horace Greeley's son is on the Curry place. Mr. Montague, a Southern Yankee, has all the Keene and Morgan estates, and nearly all the others have someone on them. They hire the Negroes at from \$5 to \$7 a month, neither clothing nor feeding them. I went with Mamma as far as Judge Richardson's to tell Mrs. Carson good-bye, as they expect to get off tomorrow. She thinks she and the children will stop in Shreveport. Mrs. Carson is in much better spirits than when at Anchorage. Mamma went on to Delhi, and Mr. Wadley and I came home alone. He is very kind but inclined to be familiar.

Aunt Laura is not very well. We would dread to see her get sick.

[Near Monroe, La.] *May 22*: In the last ten days I have been too busy to write. Mamma was away at Delhi waiting for Jimmy to return from his perilous trip to the river until last Monday, when they returned in triumph with all the Negroes except Webster, who had joined the Federal Army

May 5. On May 9 the division embarked at Trenton on transports for Alexandria. A soldier of the division wrote: "When passing by the town of Monroe, the inhabitants appeared to have turned out in mass to witness us passing by. The ladies waved their handkerchiefs . . . and the bands played some of their favorite pieces of music, to please the ladies."—Blessington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 81.

⁴² "Mr. Corrigan" may have been one of the Yankees who stole Kate's horse, Wonka. The 6th Mo. Regt. participated in the Vicksburg campaign and was probably on the west side of the river at the time the incident occurred.

some time ago, and four old Negroes who were left on the place to protect it as far as possible.

Jimmy went in with a Capt. Smith and five other men, but it was owing entirely to Jimmy's exertions that the Negroes were secured at last. They had captured the Negroes and were pushing on for the Bayou when they were pursued by a body of forty Yankees. They came within hailing distance of Capt. Smith and his men and fired volley after volley at them, but fortunately none were struck. Capt. Smith ran as fast as possible to escape and to tell Jimmy to let the Negroes go and escape for his life, but when he came up with Jimmy at the Tensas Bayou, he found Jimmy swimming the stream and the Negroes and mules already across. Jimmy had heard the firing and rushed the Negroes over in dugouts, he swimming over with the mules. He swam over two or three times.

The Yankees, having no boats, did not attempt to follow any farther, and so Jimmy saved all of the Negroes at last. They are now on their way to Texas in Jimmy's care, trying to overtake Mr. Smith's train.

Jimmy and the men with him hid all day in the canebrake just back of the fence and in the fodder loft at Brokenburn and stole out at night to reconnoiter. They found what cabins the Negroes were in, and while hiding under Lucy's house they saw her sitting there with Maria before a most comfortable fire drinking the most fragrant coffee. They were abusing Mamma, calling her "that Woman" and talking exultantly of capering around in her clothes and taking her place as mistress and heaping scorn on her. Capt. Smith says that he never heard a lady get such a tongue-lashing and that Lucy abused the whole family in round terms. At daylight they surrounded the cabins, calling the Negroes out and telling them it was useless to resist. They were captured. William made an effort to escape by jumping from a window, but at sight of a bowie knife he gave up. They gathered up all the mules and horses and set off at once, not waiting to get anything to eat. As they passed Capt. Allen's on Bear Lake, Capt. Smith and his men stopped to cook something

to eat, and it was there that he came so near being caught. The penalty would have been hanging, and I suppose there would have been no mercy shown as this is his fourth trip into the swamp to bring out property left there. He is a marked man by the Federals.

Mamma heard only after Jimmy left that the penalty for removing anything from the property confiscated by the government was hanging, and she was utterly wretched until she welcomed Jimmy back, sunburnt and tired but triumphant.

Capt. Smith says Brokenburn is lovely, a place of abundance flowing with milk and honey. The tall oaks in their summer finery of deep green are throwing shadows on the soft deep grass creeping to their very trunks, the white house is set in a very bower of green, and the flower garden is shining off at one side, a mass of bloom. He said he did want to stay and take one good breakfast with the Negroes, since he never saw so many good things to eat: a barrel of milk, jars of delicious pinkish cream, roll after roll of creamy yellow butter, a yard alive with poultry, and hams and fresh meat just killed. The garden is stocked with vegetables, the strawberry bed red with fruit, and then a supply of coffee, tea, flour, and such things bought from the Yankees. He says they would have been foolish Negroes to run off from a place like that. William and his family were occupying Mamma's room, completely furnished as we left it, and all our other possessions had been divided up among the Negroes.

[Near Monroe, La.] *May 23*: Aunt Laura was quite ill while Mamma was away, and I felt the responsibility of taking care of her. She is now much better. Mamma had two fevers, and we were very afraid it would go into a long low fever. She is quite prone to have that in the spring, but fortunately she has escaped a return of it. Sarah, Mary Wadley, and I went last afternoon to call on the Misses Compton and Stacey. We went in Mamma's famous Jersey wagon, and it is a ramshackled affair with the seats and most of the bottom dropped down. We had a merry ride and concluded that a frame, a tongue, two mules, and a

driver were the only essentials in a vehicle. We found a houseful—four rooms and seventeen people with a prospect of two other families as visitors. Mrs. Curry's three oldest daughters are there. Sarah and I sauntered across the road this morning to call on Mrs. N. Richardson and Mrs. Scarborough, but finding everybody but Mrs. Richardson sick we did not tarry. Walking through the pine woods, we saw wild flowers in such profusion. The air is so fragrant that it is a pleasure to breathe it.

There is plenty of sewing waiting on me, but I am lazy this morning. Annie, our woman, is such a comfort. She keeps our room in such nice order and washes our few clothes beautifully. She does a little washing nearly every day, as she washes also for Aunt Laura since her girl Peggy is not very accomplished in that line.

The news from Mississippi is bad. Gen. Grant with an army of 120,000 men is in the rear of Vicksburg. He has possession of Jackson, and much of the city has been burned. There has been a battle near Raymond in which we were said to have been routed because of Gen. [John C.] Pemberton's disregard of orders. We drove them out of Jackson once, but we cannot hear whether they retook it after a battle or whether our forces withdrew. We will not be discouraged. With Beauregard and Johnston leading against Grant, we must win.⁴³

In the death of Stonewall Jackson we have lost more than many battles. We have lost the conqueror on a dozen fields, the greatest general on our side. His star has set in the meridian of its glory, and he is lost to his country at the time when she needs him most. As long as there is a Southern heart, it should thrill at the name of Stonewall Jackson, our peerless general and Christian soldier. His death has struck home to every heart.⁴⁴ It is rumored that Gen. Tilghman was

⁴³ After crossing his force of over 40,000 men to the east side of the Mississippi, Grant quickly captured Port Gibson, Raymond, and Jackson; on May 18 he began his siege of Vicksburg. Pemberton commanded at Vicksburg; J. E. Johnston was departmental commander with loose supervision over Pemberton.

⁴⁴ General Jackson was killed accidentally by fire from his own troops

killed in the Jackson fight. We hope it is not true. He is a gallant gentleman.⁴⁵

[Near Monroe, La.] *May 24*: Mamma and I went over yesterday after tea to see Capt. and Mrs. Harper. They are also on their way to Texas. Capt. Harper was one of the party at home on Christmas Eve, and my last ride on Wonka was to invite the gentlemen in camp over to Brokenburn. We were glad to meet his little daughter Sophie Harper, Mr. Valentine's grandchild. Both of the Mr. Valentines talked so much about her. She is a bright, attractive child and bears a striking resemblance to her Uncle Mark in features, gesture, and expression. They say old Mr. Valentine is so overwrought by his losses and Mark's imprisonment that it is feared he will lose his mind. He escaped from his place a few days after we left entirely alone in a boat with only a few clothes. The Negroes came and stripped the place of everything while he was on it and were exceedingly insolent to him, threatening all the time to kill him. He is quite an elderly man and cannot stand hardships like younger people.

When Mamma and I rode into Monroe Sunday, we passed soldiers camped in every direction, all part of Walker's command. And on Monday Gen. Haws' brigade marched by on their way to Shreveport.⁴⁶ The children, headed by Sister, were in a great state of excitement and spent most of the day perched on the fence with buckets and gourds of water, offering it to the hot, tired soldiers, who every now and then hurraed for the little girl in red. Sister was a blaze of scarlet in her Turkey-red calico.

Gen. Walker and family stopped at Dr. Young's and the adjutant general's wife stayed at Mrs. Wadley's. I gave up

in the Battle of Chancellorsville, Va., May 4, 1863.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 203-14.

⁴⁵ General Lloyd Tilghman was killed at Edward's Depot, Miss., May 15, 1863, as his brigade covered the retreat of Confederate forces opposing Grant's advance on Vicksburg after his capture of Jackson the day before.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 487.

⁴⁶ A part of Walker's division, General J. M. Haws' brigade consisted of the 8th, 18th, and 22nd Texas Volunteer Infantry and the 13th Texas Dismounted Cavalry.—Blessington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 46.

my room to her, Mrs. McClay. She was here five days, and we all found her a delightful lady, sensible and unpretending. The staff camped on the side of the hill between the two places, and they were here morning, noon, and night.⁴⁷ One evening Mrs. Wadley invited the young people and they all had a dance. We of course did not attend. All of the staff made themselves agreeable, and the girls went wild over them and so flattered and complimented them that I think another week of it would have ruined the young officers. They would have felt superior to their general. We went over to see the drill, and the compliments heaped on the officers were enough to turn the heads of so many Solomons.

It was about their first experience with soldiers, and the girls ran wild. Maj. French, chief of artillery, was a splendid fellow and had a manner that, after a few minute's conversation, cheated you into the belief that he was an old friend. Maj. Stone claimed kin with us, but he was a real Arkansawyer, and I did not fancy him greatly. Maj. Mason, the elegant and lady-killer of the crowd, a Virginian, self-conceited to the last degree, was already ruined by flattery before the girls had a chance at him. Also there were Capt. Galt, a Texian, and Capt. Smith, a cousin of Maj. Mason from Virginia, small and dark, with a face like a knot. He keeps a diary, and Miss Mary and Nora Compton got hold of it and read his opinion of all these girls. He would blush scarlet every time they alluded to it, but they would not tell us what he had written. We judged it was not specially complimentary.

Gen. Walker is a plain, pleasant gentleman,⁴⁸ and his wife

⁴⁷ General Walker's staff included: Major R. P. McClay, Chief of Staff; Major A. H. Mason, Commissary; Major William M. Stone, Quartermaster; Major Thomas B. French, Artillery; Surgeons E. J. Beall and E. L. Massies; Captain J. A. Galt, Assistant Adjutant General; Captain Thomas Cox, Assistant Quartermaster; 1st Lieutenant Compton French, Aide-de-camp; Captain W. A. Smith, Assistant Adjutant General; and Captain A. Faulkner, Cavalry.—*Ibid.*, 67.

⁴⁸ Major General John G. Walker, born in Missouri in 1826, was a first lieutenant in the Mexican War and later served on the frontier in the West. He was a captain on duty at Fort Union, N. M., at the outbreak of the war. Commissioned colonel in command of the 2nd Regt. Virginia troops under Beauregard, he was soon promoted to brigadier,

is an accomplished, stylish woman. We saw them frequently. Gen. McCulloch affects great plainness of apparel.⁴⁹ Mamma and I did not specially fancy him. Col Randall is the finest, most military-looking man of them all.⁵⁰ We were sorry to see them march away going to Alexandria.⁵¹

[Near Monroe, La.] *May 26*: Mamma is staying tonight with Mrs. Young whose little girl Alice is sick unto death. Johnny, who by the way could not overtake Mr. Smith, and Mamma went into Monroe this morning trying to buy a wagon and carriage but failed to get either. So we must needs wait here until we can get conveyances, and we could not ask for a more delightful stopping place or kinder hosts. Such a haven of rest after the trouble and anxiety of the last three months. We have put away troubles and distress for a time as a wayworn traveler lays down his burden when he stops to rest, enjoying the coolness and verdure, though he knows the burden must be lifted and he must journey on through toil and pain to the end.

How I dread being secluded on some remote farm in Texas, far away from all we know and love and unable to get news of any kind. It is a terrifying prospect.

I am busy sewing most of the time. We will soon be through all our clothes—just a white barège dress of Carrie's to alter for myself and Mamma intends making a black

then major general. He commanded a division in General Lee's army in the battles of Harper's Ferry and Sharpsburg. He was assigned to command of the division of Texas troops in December, 1862. He left that division in 1864 to become commander of the District of Louisiana and later was in command of the Department of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.—*Ibid.*, 72-74.

⁴⁹ In October, 1862, Brigadier General Henry E. McCulloch organized the Texas Volunteer Infantry at Camp Nelson, Ark., into the division which General Walker assumed command of shortly thereafter. At this time he was in command of the 3rd Brigade.

⁵⁰ Colonel H. Randall commanded the 2nd Brigade. He was later wounded at the Battle of Jenkin's Ferry, Ark., April 30, 1864, and died a few days later.

⁵¹ Walker's division left Monroe on May 16 for Campti, La., and later in the month moved to the Madison Parish area to attack Federal forces there.—Blessington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 83-94.

velvet hat for me. Then, all our pressing needs will be gratified.

Miss Tabithia Scarborough and Julia Wilson, the real one this time, came over to see us yesterday. Gay, pleasant girls. Miss Scarborough is very pretty, lovely black eyes, soft and big. We are over at Dr. Young's frequently. Aunt Laura and Beverly are quite comfortable there, and Carrie improves on acquaintanceship. William Wadley and Mr. Young do all they can to make time pass pleasantly. The country is crowded with refugees, every house full to overflowing. Mrs. Wadley has taken Mrs. Barr and Mrs. Coney Morancy, her daughter, and little girl to board. They have been here a week. Mrs. Morancy is the typical young widow and very bright, but, I fear, sly.

Several days of hard fighting between Jackson and Vicksburg. It is rumored that Grant is in retreat to his gunboats. May it be true. Not a word from any of our soldiers since the fifth of April. The long silence is very trying to Mamma, but she is a brave and capable woman, and such a business woman.

[Near Monroe, La.] *June 3*: Lt. Valentine is back from his Northern prison and brings us blessed news of My Brother's safety. He was wounded in the left arm above the elbow in the battle at Chancellorsville but by this time has rejoined his regiment. Tom Manlove was also slightly wounded and had a furlough home. My Brother could have come on a forty-day leave but did not know where to find us. He was being nursed at a private house in Richmond when Lt. Valentine came through there after being exchanged. He met him.

I was out with the others on a huckleberry party when Mr. Valentine came, and it was nearly dusk when we got back. Someone called to us that Lt. Valentine had been there all evening, and my heart sank for I thought he had gone. I did want to see him and hear from My Brother and all of Lt. Valentine's adventures. But as we sprang out of the carriage, there he was looking better than I ever saw him and waiting to give me the warmest greetings and reproach

at the same time for not waiting to see him. He was so glad to see us, especially Little Sister, who welcomed him most enthusiastically. They were always great chums and Sister's kiss pleased him immensely. The poor fellow has no women-kind to kiss and make a fuss over him. How delighted his father will be. Should like to see the meeting. He went away a wealthy man and gets back with nothing but his pay as a soldier. He takes it most philosophically and seems to mind it only on his father's account.

He could not tell us much that was interesting about the North. They were kept too close to see or hear anything. He represents prison life as most monotonous and wearisome, but they were not ill-treated.

He says My Brother is having a nice time in Richmond and regrets the hole in his coat more than the hole in his arm. The last Nature will heal, the first will take money. Lt. Valentine joined his regiment, which was under marching orders at once, and they are now somewhere in the swamp. We are massing quite a force there under Gen. Taylor. May we strike a telling blow.

The news from Vicksburg is very contradictory, but there seems to be constant fighting going on. We were repulsed in every engagement until the troops fell back behind our entrenchment, since then we have driven back every assault with heavy losses on their side. They have made desperate charges on the batteries only to fall back with great slaughter. Numbers of Negroes, placed by *their friends* in the forefront of the battles, have been slain. Poor things, I am sorry for them. Gen. Grant has surrounded Vicksburg with an immense army. The struggle has commenced, but the great battle is still to be fought. Our friends around Vicksburg must have lost everything before this.

[Near Monroe, La.] *June 5:* Aunt Laura and Mrs. Young have had the long expected falling out, and Aunt Laura has gone to board about three miles from here. We think that in a short time the fate of Vicksburg will be decided, and she will know whether to go on to Vicksburg or to Texas with us. Mamma is also waiting in the hope that our troops will drive

the Yankees from the swamp⁵² and we can go back home until fall or at least get what is left of the furniture.

Letters today from My Brother and Capt. Manlove. Col. Manlove praises My Brother for great gallantry in the last battle. That is something we hear after every fight that he has passed through, and still he is not promoted, which we think so strange for such a gallant young officer. I fear now it will never come. Brother Coley and Dr. Buckner are still in Tennessee and well. No word from Uncle Bo.

Mrs. Bo Barr entertained us with excellent music tonight. She plays quite well and is looking much prettier than before her marriage. She is very quiet. She certainly threw herself away. He is so dissipated.

I am trying to braid a pretty braid of rye straw, as I can get no palmetto here, and I have promised Lt. Valentine a hat. Plaited one for Johnny in less than a day. It is rough and ugly, but he likes it. It is so light. Hatmaking is as much the rage here now as it was last summer in the swamp.

The Misses Scarborough and Wilson were here last evening. They and Julia Barr are the most likable girls we have met. The Dawson girls also called again, but I do not care to cultivate them. They are essentially men's girls, and so they will not care to cultivate us, unless My Brother was here.

We had a charming ride the other evening. Went out huckleberrying but not a berry did we see. The ride part of the way was over high hills shaded by towering longleaf pines and carpeted with tall woods grass and wild flowers, and sloping in green waves from the hills lay deep ferny hollows.

Mrs. Curry with the younger children came out from Floyd yesterday and stopped to see us. They take up their line of march for Texas on Monday. Lucy Seale paid us all the long-promised call. Her mother thinks Lucy and I are enough alike to be sisters, and I just hate to look like Lucy.

⁵² Walker's division left Campti, La., on May 28, and moved to the mouth of the Tensas River, near New Carthage. On May 31 elements of the division skirmished with Federal forces at Perkins' Plantation on the way to Richmond to prepare for attack on Federals at Milliken's Bend.—*Ibid.*, 87-92.

She is just the style I least admire, and we are not the slightest kin.

Mr. Hardison is still very ill at Floyd. We pray he may be spared. He has been a good friend to us all. Mrs. Hardison sent me two lovely organdy dresses she had promised me. They look like old times. They are so pretty. She says she will never need anything of that kind again. She is very despondent, poor lady.

M. Wadley était très dévoué mais il est trop gros. . . .

[Near Monroe, La.] *June 10*: We have bidden Aunt Laura and Beverly a long adieu I fear. They started yesterday for Mississippi to join Dr. Buckner, if possible. They go to Harrisonburg on a boat and then through the country to the river, if possible.⁵³ They are under the care of Mr. John Curry, and it is doubtful whether they can get on. But Aunt Laura, or rather Mamma, thought it better for her to attempt it than to go to Texas. Aunt Laura wished to go on with us, but Mamma feared she could not stand the hardships of the long trip camping out and the rough life with little hope of seeing or hearing from Dr. Buckner until the war is over. We hated so to see her go. We shall miss them for a long time. We went in to Monroe and saw them off. Sent numbers of letters by them.

The news of today is that our men were repulsed at Milliken's Bend and are falling back to Delhi. A very different account from the first. It is hard to believe that Southern soldiers—and Texans at that—have been whipped by a mongrel crew of white and black Yankees. There must be some mistake.⁵⁴

⁵³ They probably traveled on a steamer from Monroe to Harrisonburg, La. Kate does not say how Aunt Laura succeeded in crossing the Mississippi or how she got to Chattanooga, where she was when next mentioned.

⁵⁴ The Battle of Milliken's Bend began about daylight on June 7 and lasted most of the morning. The white and Negro Federal troops were driven from their fortifications back to the levee, but two Federal gunboats came to their assistance. The Confederates withdrew to Richmond and sent their wounded to Monroe. When Walker withdrew to Delhi a few days later, the Federals attacked his rear and burned Richmond completely on June 15. Richmond was never rebuilt.—Blessington,

Mamma and Johnny with several other swampers went into Monroe at 2 o'clock this morning to take the cars to Delhi, intending to go in to their places if feasible. Fortunately they missed their train and will now await further developments.

All of us were busy from 5 o'clock until dusk making mattresses for the wounded soldiers expected at Monroe from the fight at Milliken's Bend. It is said the Negro regiments fought there like mad demons, but we cannot believe that. We know from long experience they are cowards.⁵⁵

Monday Miss Sarah, Mr. Wadley, and I went to a fish fry given by Mrs. Wilson at Crew Lake. It was tiresome and I was sorry I went. Mrs. Proctor, a widow you read about, was talking most of the day about Capt. Catlin with a most conscious air. She evidently thinks him a great catch.

Aunt Laura spent Sunday with us, our last day together. She went off in fear and trembling but is determined to get through if possible. She is such a sensitive, nervous woman that it will be a great ordeal for her, but it could not be helped.

Julia Barr and I are quite friends. I like Miss Sarah very much, but she is so absorbed with Mrs. Morancy that we see little of her. We are staying so long I fear Mrs. Wadley will get tired of us, and so we are all reconciled to making an early start to Texas.

[Near Monroe, La.] *June 15*: Visiting and visitors, black-berry parties, and long walks over the hills have occupied the time since Wednesday. Julia Barr and I took tea with Mrs. Dortch and were agreeably entertained. We have been since to see Mrs. Waddell, who is a charming pretty lady.

Mamma and Johnny are busy making arrangements for us

Walker's Texas Division, 95-126; *Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, I, 456; Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the Civil War* (Boston, 1953), 220-24.

⁵⁵ General Grant stated: "This was the first important engagement of the war in which colored troops were under fire. These men were very raw, having all been enlisted since the beginning of the siege [of Vicksburg], but they behaved well."—*Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant*, I, 456; see also Quarles, *The Negro in the Civil War*, 224.

to get off. Will start on Wednesday. All busy this afternoon making a tent of some carpeting, the only thing to be bought in Monroe and it was \$4 a yard. From Jimmy's letter, received today from Titus [Texas], think we will be on the road two weeks. He does not write encouragingly. The country is not more abundant than this and Billy, another Negro man, is almost dead. But Mamma hopes to find it better than Jimmy paints it. Our delightful sojourn at this place is nearly over, and it will be many a weary day before we are so comfortable again. They are the very kindest people we ever met, and Mr. Wadley, who returned a few days ago, is just as generous and kind as all the others. To crown all her good deeds Mrs. Wadley this morning refused to take a cent for our board all these seven weeks. Mamma insisted on it, but both Mr. and Mrs. Wadley declared they could not think of such a thing, saying Mamma would need every cent she had before she got settled again. Our own relations could not have been kinder, and we were total strangers to them when they took us in out of the goodness of their hearts. May God reward them, we never can. Tomorrow is our last day here and we will go around and say good-bye to the neighbors. This lovely family and Julia Barr I shall be sorry to leave.

[Between Monroe and Minden, La.] *June 19:* Half past twelve this sultry June 19 we are sitting under the shade of a spreading oak about halfway between Monroe and Minden eating rosy June apples and waiting for one of our Jersey mules to get over a slight attack of colic, when we will journey. We had to undertake the trip in the Jersey after all. Could not find another thing. Johnny drives with a most reckless hand up and down these steep, rocky hills.

We are on the road for Texas at last, and I imagine no party of emigrants ever started with sadder hearts or less pleasure in anticipation. If we had gone on at once when coming to Monroe, we would have liked the idea, but we stayed just long enough at Mrs. Wadley's to spoil us for a trip like this. We find it very lonely, only we four and the servants. If we could have joined another party, it would be

so much more enjoyable. If only Julia Barr and that family could have come on at the same time. A passing soldier tells us that a Federal force is advancing on Monroe. We left on Wednesday in the Jersey with it and the luggage wagons packed to their fullest capacity. We all left home without a tear, the dread of staying there was so great, but we and all the family were in tears when we told them good-bye at Mrs. Wadley's. Shall we ever meet such kind friends again?

The first long hill halted us. We tried for an hour to get the mules on the wagon to pull up it, but they would not or could not. Mamma had part of the baggage unloaded and sent back to the Wadley's, and at last we got underway. It was such a dark, rainy afternoon that we thought we would not commence camping that evening but would stay at some house on the road. So we went ahead of the wagon, and before sunset commenced enquiring for lodging. At house after house, dark and uninviting with a host of little tow-heads and a forelorn-looking woman, generally spinning, amid the barking of a pack of dogs, would come the response, "Naw, we don't take in travelers," in a tone of contempt, as though the very name of traveler was a disgrace. We kept this up, the poor tired mules dragging on from place to place, until 10 o'clock at night. Being refused at the last house, Mamma declared we could go no farther, and we would be forced to stay in the Jersey until morning. But three swampers staying there—Judge Farrar one of them—heard our distressed voices, came to our relief, and induced the owner to allow us to stay. We were glad enough of the shelter, for that was about all it was. Chunks of fat meat and cold, white-looking cornbread with very good water were all the refreshments. This night's experience satisfied us, and we have determined to camp out for the rest of the way.

The next day we went on as far as Mrs. Bedford's, about twenty-five miles from Monroe. They gave us a nice dinner, and we had a pleasant little stay there. We went on in the afternoon with a supply of pretty June apples from their orchard, camped out that night for the first time, and found it far better than asking for shelter and getting nothing,

nothing but snubs and coarse fare at exorbitant prices. It looked like it would rain every minute. It seemed nothing new to be lying out under the shadow of a tree with the stars looking dimly down through the branches, with the lightning flashing in the North, the sultry night breeze swaying the wildwoods grass in my face, and a nondescript bug attempting to creep into my ear. We have read so many stories of camping it seems like an old song. Shall we have any of the startling adventures that travelers usually have to relate?

We met Harry Morris yesterday. He says Mary Gustine is to be married in about two weeks to a Capt. Buckner, a widower with one child. It is a short engagement as they have not known each other more than six weeks. All of that crowd are at Camden, Ark.

[Near Bellevue, La.] ⁵⁶ *June 22*: We are resting for dinner in a thicket of blackjack and towering pines after a wearisome ride over the worst roads. Now we find we branched off in the wrong direction and are only four miles farther on our way than when we left camp this morning. We passed through Minden,⁵⁷ such a pretty little town with the deepest white sand in the streets, about the size of Monroe. I wish we could have located there. It looked very inviting, but we must go on where the Negroes are. We camped near a nice-looking house, and the people were kind in sending us out milk and butter, the first time we have been able to get anything of the kind. We also bought some chickens, a relief after a steady diet of ham and bacon. We get a lot of fruit, apples, plums, and huckleberries, the large low-bush variety, also, the blackberries are ripening. We stop several times a day or whenever we see a tempting thicket and enjoy the fruit. We so often have to wait for the wagon. We need never hurry. No flour yet, but we hear

⁵⁶ A small settlement on Bodcau Bayou, about seventeen miles north-east of Shreveport.

⁵⁷ Founded in 1836, Minden was named for a town in northern Germany by its founder, Charles V. Veeder. In 1860 it had a population of 1,146.

it is plentiful farther on. Some tea bought in Monroe is evidently made of blackberry leaves. Dampened and untwisted they are identical, absolutely without flavor.

[Lamar County, Tex.]⁵⁸ *July 7*: While camping out we were generally too tired at our noonday rest to do anything but throw ourselves down on the cushions and sleep until dinner. And at night when we stopped, I had only spirit to lean lazily back in one of our two rocking chairs and watch Annie get supper or to look up at the stars and think of all the dear friends that the waves of Fate are sweeping farther and farther away from us every day. I had such a longing for home and the dear life of the past that my very soul would grow sick. I know Mamma felt it far more than I did, but she would not complain.

I will copy a letter I wrote to Anna Dobbs which tells all there is to tell of our late journeyings. We are anxious to know where they and Dr. Carson's family have settled.

Here we are safely hidden in a dark corner of the far off County of Lamar after a tiresome, monotonous trip of little less than three weeks, and I am already as disgusted as I expected to be. This part of the land abounds in white-headed children and buttermilk, my two pet aversions. It is a place where the people are just learning that there is a war going on, where Union feeling is rife,⁵⁹ and where the principal amusement of loyal citizens is hanging suspected Jayhawkers. Hoops are just coming in with full fashion. This is indeed the place where hoops 'most do flourish and abide.' Have not seen a hoopless lady since entering the state. Shoes are considered rather luxuries than necessities and are carefully kept for state occasions. As for bowls and pitchers, 'Oh no, they never mention them.

⁵⁸ Lamar County—at the end of the 275 mile journey from Monroe—was named for Mirabeau B. Lamar, when the county was organized in 1840. Paris, the county seat in 1863, was a small town.—A. W. Neville, *The History of Lamar County* (Paris, Tex., 1937), 21–24; *The Handbook of Texas*, ed. Walter Prescott Webb (Austin, 1952), II, 15.

⁵⁹ Lamar County delegates to the state Secession Convention cast their votes against secession, as did those of fourteen other counties in Texas. The county supported the Confederacy, however, and raised several military units.—*Handbook of Texas*, II, 15.

Their name is never heard.' One tin pan or a frying pan answers every purpose. Wash tubs seem obsolete and not to be bought at any price. The only way of killing time—and one never feels more like killing him than on this desolate wind-swept prairie—is to attend some of the protracted meetings that are being carried on all around us. And oh, the swarms of ugly, rough people, different only in degrees of ugliness. There must be something in the air of Texas fatal to beauty. We have not seen a good-looking or educated person since we entered the state. We are in the dark corner. We could not stand it here for a permanent stay, but Mamma has only stopped here for a breathing spell and to see how the Negroes are getting on. She will start out soon in search of a home until the war is over.

We camped out except when it rained, which it did most of the last week, thereby ruining most of the clothes we had so laboriously amassed after fleeing from the Yankees. We would be so tired by night we welcomed the rudest shelter. The longer we traveled the more wearisome it grew, and I never turned over at night without expecting to feel the sting of a tarantula or centipede. But we really saw very few and reached here without an accident. I wrote to Sarah Wadley never to come to Texas for pleasure, but if forced to come to cover herself with a thin coat of tar to protect herself from the myriads of insects along the road. And here, we have settled at their headquarters—ticks, redbugs, fleas by the millions, and snakes gliding through the grass by hundreds. But we rarely hear of anyone being snake-bitten. Game, deer and turkeys, are abundant about here but not eatable on account of the insects tormenting them until they are too tough to eat.

We met Jimmy coming to meet us near Walnut Hill, Ark. He brought the news of Billy's death, the seventh of our Negroes to die since New Year's. We were surprised to hear that Uncle Austin was cultivating two places near Walnut Hill, and we waited there nearly a day to see him. He has managed to save his Negroes. Mamma sent for him and he came and was delighted to see us. He traveled with us that evening and part of the next day. He is looking well but much older. He has not heard from his daughters for months.

We are staying right out on the bare prairie in a rough

two-room shanty with the overseer and his family. With only the bare necessities of life, we think it will be at least two months before we can make any change, and so we must needs make the best of it.

[Lamar County, Tex.] *July 12*: We made our first visit in Texas yesterday. We went to a protracted meeting being carried on nine miles from here at an old schoolhouse called—it must be in mockery—"Paradise." After the meeting we went by invitation to spend the evening and night with some real nice people, settlers from Virginia, the McGleasons. They are a pleasant family and exceedingly hospitable. We came back this morning after a ride of nearly eighteen miles, having missed our road three times. The prairie roads are so much alike it is impossible for strangers to distinguish the right from the wrong.

The congregation was much more presentable than the Gray Rock crowd. We saw several nice-looking families, but all were in the fashions of three years ago. If they would only leave off their tremendous hoops, but hoops seem in the very zenith of their popularity. Mamma and I were the only women folks without the awkward, ungraceful cages. No doubt the people thought us hopelessly out of date. We have not worn them for a long time. Nothing looks funnier than a woman walking around with an immense hoop—bare-footed.⁶⁰

Mamma and I went several days ago to Tarrant in Hopkins County [Tex.].⁶¹ The road ran part of the way over a lovely rolling prairie, dotted with clumps of trees and covered with the brilliant, yellow coreopsis in full bloom and gemmed with countless little mounds of bright green, like emeralds set in gold. Tarrant is the hottest looking, new little town right

⁶⁰ The hoop skirt was introduced by Empress Eugenie at the French court in 1853. Originally of crinoline over many petticoats, the garment soon employed wire frames. In the 1850's the newspapers printed many stories of the embarrassing experiences of hoop skirt wearers on streets, in trains and street cars, and in church pews. In spite of ridicule the fashion persisted throughout the Civil War.—Arthur C. Cole, *The Irrepressible Conflict, 1850-1865* (New York, 1934), 167.

⁶¹ South of Lamar County, Hopkins was organized in 1846 with Tarrant, now a ghost town, as the county seat.—*Handbook of Texas*, I, 835.

out in the prairie—not a tree. We tried to eat dinner at the roughest house and with the dirtiest people we have met yet. The table was set on a low, sunny gallery and half a dozen dirty, unshaven men took their seats in their shirt sleeves at the dirtiest tablecloth and coarsest ware. We saw the Negro girl wash the dishes at the *duck pond* right out in the yard. That was too much for me, but Mamma and Mr. Smith managed to swallow down something.

Mr. Smith is hiring most of the hands out for the balance of the year. There is a great demand for them, and he can see that they are well taken care of. They have all gotten perfectly well since coming out here.⁶²

The prairie we are living on is called a thicket prairie. There are clumps of dwarf dogwood, spice trees, and plums, tangled together with wild grape and other vines and alive with snakes. The plums are just in season, a sour, red variety just like the swamp wild plums, and are nice for jelly. The prairie is a mass of flowers, one variety covering it at a time. Before you realize it, that color has faded away and another has taken its place, and this succession of flowers and colors goes on until frost comes and spreads a brown sheet over all. There are many familiar garden flowers: blue salvia, coreopsis, verbenas, larkspur, standing cypress, and now as far as the eye can reach the prairie is a mass of waving purple plumes, "French pinks," the natives call them.

Jimmy has just brought in a beautiful little fawn and given it to me. I have always wanted one. They make such gentle, beautiful pets. This one's ears are solidly covered with ticks, and one of the Negroes is laboriously picking them off.

We hear no news now but accounts of murders done and suffered by the natives. Nothing seems more common or less condemned than assassination. There have been four or five men shot or hanged within a few miles of us within a week. No one that we have seen seems surprised or shocked, but take it as a matter of course that an obnoxious person should

⁶² Removal from the malarial condition of the swamps evidently accounted for the difference.

be put to death by some offended neighbor. A few evenings ago a captain in the army had just reached home on a furlough three hours before when he was shot at through his window. He was killed and his wife dangerously wounded. The authorities are trying to find the men who did it. It is supposed to be one of his company who had vowed vengeance against him. The other miscreants go unwhipped of justice.

[Lamar County, Tex.] *July 16*: The atmosphere has been most peculiar for several days. The air is cool and damp. The earth, the air, the sky, all are a dull dead grey. The sun seems to emit neither heat nor light, gleaming with a dim red glare like a blood-red moon. We thought at first it was one phase of the Texas climate, but the natives are as much puzzled by it as the strangers in the land. Some think it portentous, a sign of great victories or defeats. Others think it the smoke from burning grain in Mississippi. No one really knows anything about it.

We hear that we have won a glorious victory back of Vicksburg, repulsing one wing of Grant's army and opening communication with Vicksburg and replenishing her supplies. Also we hear of surprising the enemy in south Louisiana and capturing many men and stores.⁶³ We also hear that Gen. Lee's army is laying waste Pennsylvania. If only the Pennsylvanians may feel some of the horrors of war and know the bitterness of defeat. We live in hopes that our day of triumph may come but we fear not in the near future.

We spent yesterday with Mrs. Vaughn, Mrs. Smith's cousin and our nearest neighbor. She lives in a double log cabin with merely the necessities of life, but it is a more comfortable home than most we have seen. Texas seems a hard land for women and children. They fly around and work like troopers while the men loll on the galleries and seemingly have nothing to do. Mamma cannot start on her search for a new home for a week yet, and it is disagreeable living here *en famille* with the Smiths, though Mrs. Smith is

⁶³ These rumors were false.

kind and we should appreciate it. But their ways are not our ways.

As we sat on the gallery tonight, gazing across the darkening prairie into the gleaming west, the very air was brilliant with fireflies. The fancy came that they were the eyes of the departed Indians, come to look again on their old hunting grounds, flashing through the night, looking with scowling, revengeful faces on the changes wrought by their old enemies, the palefaces. I fancy I can see the ghostly shapes one minute taking the form of an Indian brave with bended bow and flying arrow, the next fading into thin air leaving only the fiery eyes.

We all spoke of going to Paris, twenty-five miles, to attend a large Baptist meeting returning the next day but concluded it was too far.

[Lamar County, Tex.] *July 26*: Mamma, Jimmy, and Mr. Smith are all away. Jimmy left on Friday with a wagon for Navasota to buy salt and different kinds of merchandise. A long, lonely trip of two months.⁶⁴ We hated for him to have to go alone with only the Negroes. We can tell by the issue of his trip whether Friday is such an unlucky day.

If Jimmy could have stayed here and attended the numerous religious meetings going on around us, I think he would surely have joined some church, and what a safeguard that would be to him. He was much impressed by one of the last sermons he heard and has been thinking earnestly and deeply. Jimmy always had a strong religious tendency. The poor little fellow is off on a tiresome journey now.

We went to Lydonia (?)⁶⁵ today to see Miss Mary Moran taken into the Presbyterian church. It was the first time I have witnessed their ordinance of baptism, and it did not seem a very solemn rite. Immersion, I think, is the true way.

I had my first call from a Texas beau yesterday evening.

⁶⁴ A journey of more than 250 miles. On the Navasota River in southwestern Grimes County, Navasota was on the Houston and Texas Central Railroad and was therefore a supply point.

⁶⁵ Ladonia was a small community, settled in 1840, in southeastern Fannin County.

A smooth-faced, rosy-cheeked, young dandy, dressed in the height of Paris fashion and dotingly proud of his jet-black imperial. Several of the elite of Blue's Prairie have called on us. I wonder, shall we look as old-fashioned as they after a year or two of prairie life? Even Blue's Prairie is looking lovely now. It is covered with a flower, looking like feathery, white plumes laced and tangled together with a yellow love vine and purple maypop vines.

There are some most disquieting rumors believed by the despondent and chicken-hearted, but we do not give them credence. It is said both Vicksburg and Port Hudson have been taken, with a number of prisoners.⁶⁶ We have heard it affirmed and contradicted half a dozen times. We will wait to see Gen. Johnston's official report of such disaster before believing it. Unionism is rampant about here. There was a company of Jayhawkers for the Federal side raised in this county. Half of the militia have been drafted for six months, and oh, the moaning and bewailing of the feminine population. But I cannot be sorry for the militia. My sympathies are all with the soldiers in the field.

[Lamar County, Tex.] *July 29*: Mamma returned this evening from a fruitless trip. She could find no place that would at all suit, and we may be here for months. How can we stand it! How foolish to distress myself for such a cause.

Vicksburg is taken without a doubt. If our men had held out only one day longer, they might have been relieved, as Gen. Johnston fought the enemy the following day, in ignorance of the fall of the city, taking 5,000 prisoners and winning a decided victory. But that is not an offset to the 20,000 of our men said to have been captured at Vicksburg. How has the mighty fallen, and to give up on the Fourth of July to make it even worse. We wish they could have held on at least one day longer, but we know nothing of the hardships our soldiers have endured there in the last eight

⁶⁶ Vicksburg surrendered on July 4 after withstanding siege for approximately fifty days. General Pemberton was severely criticized for surrendering on that particular day. Port Hudson capitulated on July 8, leaving the entire Mississippi in Federal hands.

months. We are satisfied, however, that the Confederate soldiers held on as long as possible. The fall of Vicksburg makes us tremble for Texas. She can be invaded from so many points that Mamma knows not where to look for a place of greater safety.

Our only hope is in Lee the Invincible. If he has only taken Washington or Philadelphia as we hear he has, we can stand the loss of our Gibraltar, but to lose it and gain nothing in return is insupportable. We will hope for the best. May God defend the right.

Mamma saw Dr. and Mrs. Carson in Tyler. Both are in very bad health. Mamma fears that Dr. Carson has dropsy and that he will not recover, too sad a probability to think of. He is such a good, useful man, weighted with such responsibilities. They are boarding and as far from being settled as we are. They have been traveling nearly ever since we saw them when they left Monroe.

Mamma and Mrs. Carson were delighted to meet. I can imagine their animated conversation and comparison of experiences. Willy Carson has joined Mr. Matt Johnson's company. He is such a delicate boyish-looking fellow to act and suffer as a man. I think he is about Brother Walter's age. May the discipline strengthen instead of kill him as it does so many of our high-strung boys.

We were saddened to hear of Capt. Harper's death, a gallant soldier so full of life and hope when we saw him last in Monroe. Though he had lost home and everything, he was as gay and bouyant as though everything was going on his way. He took a huge dose of morphine, given by mistake of the doctor for quinine. He went off to sleep at once, and they could never rouse him, though they worked over him all night and used the most cruel remedies as a last resort. So much worse than if he had fallen in battle. Now Mamma is anxious to take Sophie Harper, since she has only a step-mother. She thinks Mr. Valentine would be glad for her to have charge of her. She thinks of writing about it in a few days to Mr. Valentine and Mrs. Harper. Sophie would be a nice companion for Sister, who stands this life like a native

and finds plenty to amuse her. She and Mrs. Smith are great chums.

[Lamar County, Tex.] *July 31*: Mamma has been sick since her return. The long Jersey trips are very trying on her, but she is up this evening. Tomorrow we are going up to Paris with Mr. Smith to see if Mamma can get him off from militia duty. He is drafted to go off on Wednesday for six month's service. We do not see how Mamma can get on without him, and so she is anxious to get him detailed. Mrs. Smith is also anxious to get him off, but their eagerness is as nothing to Mr. Smith's. I never saw a man with such a dread of the army.

The fruit that Mamma and Mr. Smith collected on their journey—and they were most thoughtful—is just out. We did so enjoy it. Our fare is not of the best. Mamma bought me a pair of \$25 shoes, but unfortunately I cannot wear them. Not anything of a fit, and I must still cling to my calfskin *chaussures*, homeknit stockings, and brogans, something different from the lace-like clock stockings and French slippers of the olden times. I miss nice things for my feet now more than anything. I feel so slovenly with these horrors on exhibition. But a truce to complaints. I might be dight out in a large hoop and bare feet.

[Lamar County, Tex.] *Aug. 3*: We have been to Paris and returned and well did our errand speed. Mamma's eloquent representation to Gen. Smith (a militia general) of her forlorn condition if Mr. Smith was taken away brought the general, a rough old fellow, over to her view of the case at once, and he readily promised to give him a discharge. Mamma's eloquence carried the day, for he impressed it on us all, but especially Mr. Smith, that it was entirely on Mamma's account that he was granted leave. Mamma's lovely face and winning manner stand her in good stead these days. Mrs. Smith does not like to think Mr. Smith's freedom is entirely due to Mamma, but he is a relieved and grateful man.

Paris is a clean, pretty place in the edge of Blossom

Prairie, clumps of trees and deep white sand in the streets.⁶⁷ We went to church and saw a really nice-looking congregation of refined-looking people. We all liked the place so well that Mamma would rent a place there, but it is too near the borderline, the first point for an invasion and right next to the Indian Nation. We do not wish to lose our scalps in addition to everything else. We saw a large party of Indian men dashing through the town. They are nearly all Southern sympathizers, we hear.⁶⁸ We went shopping. There are several well-filled stores, but the prices are beyond anything. We saw a pretty light calico but Mamma could not afford it at \$6 a yard. A penknife was very tempting, but who would give \$25 for a little Yankee knife? Our nails will have to grow like eagle's claws before we can afford an extravagance of that kind. We did get a few articles, absolute essentials, and Mamma indulged me in a piece of extravagance—a deck of playing cards at \$5. They are a different kind from those the girls use out here, but I fancy they will afford us more amusement than the finest pair of cotton cards.

A gentleman gave us a late Louisiana paper containing Mary Gustine's marriage on July 21. I know she was a beautiful bride, and our best wishes go with her for her future happiness. I wonder how Brother Coley will stand the loss of his sweetheart, his first love affair. Like most boys, he lost his heart to a girl several years the older—fortunately a disease that never kills a boy of that age.

The Baptist meeting has been going on in Paris for seven weeks, and sixty have joined that church. It seems the strongest church of this section. Sunday morning we heard a splendid sermon, the best since hearing Dr. Marshall preach two years ago. I wish Jimmy could have heard it. It was

⁶⁷ Originally called Pinhook, Paris was founded in 1839 and became the county seat of Lamar County in 1844—*Handbook of Texas*, II, 334.

⁶⁸ These were probably Choctaws. The Choctaw Nation was located just across Red River from Paris. When the Federal Government practically abandoned Indian Territory in April, 1861, by withdrawing troops from Forts Washita, Arbuckle, Smith, and Cobb, many Indians, especially the Choctaws and Chickasaws, some of whom were slave owners, joined the Confederate Army.—Foreman, *A History of Oklahoma*, 100–130.

the first real Baptist sermon I ever really listened to. Have heard the preacher, Mr. Buckner, knows what he believes and is not afraid to preach it from the pulpit.⁶⁹

We have made the acquaintance of another Texas gallant. Dr. Bywaters, introduced as a friend by Mr. McGleason, walked home with us from church. One thing in his favor he does not say "mile" for "miles" and he does not ignore the plural of "year."

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Aug. 10*: Nearly the close of summer and we are still in our first Texas retreat. We have dubbed it "Elysian Fields." Mr. Smith has been away nearly a week looking for another location. No matter where we may go, we are almost sure to meet some of our old friends or acquaintances, for everybody about Monroe is moving out this way, we hear, scattering over Texas. How good the sight of a familiar face will be. I would feel like kissing nearly anybody I had ever seen before.

If the Yankees are at Monroe as we hear today, our letters sent yesterday will never reach their owners. Mamma wrote asking Mr. Valentine to let her take Sophie. Mamma also wrote to Mrs. Wadley, but we think they must have moved on before this. How we long for news of all our friends.

Our list of victories last month were all a mistake. Gen. Lee has recrossed into Virginia, and our march into Pennsylvania seems to have been barren of results. We do not hold nor have we destroyed a single Northern city, as we so much hoped. A dark hour for the Confederacy. The loss of Vicksburg has stunned the whole country. It is a grievous blow, and there is great discouragement at least on this side of the Mississippi River. But the reaction will come. The people will rally to strike a more deadly blow, to fight till the last armed foe expires, to conquer or die.

Mamma, Sister, and Johnny are just in from their round of investigation. Instead of renting Mrs. White's house they rented a book. The house was already taken, but she had quite a library of books that she would hire out for fifty cents

⁶⁹ Rev. R. C. Buckner was pastor of the Baptist church on South Church Street.—Neville, *History of Lamar County*, 108.

a week. She would not think of lending them. The book Mamma brought was a most worthless thing, but the engravings in it are fine. Mrs. White is an educated woman, lives in a nice house, and is well to do, but a regular skin-flint. She is living from day to day on the verge of the grave, suffering from some incurable complaint, and is still very eager to make money, extorting the last cent. She has one of our women hired to wait on her. She is a Yankee. That explains all. Mamma also bought an old backgammon box for the children and thinks she will buy a copy of Shakespeare, a very good one, for \$14. We will then have what someone calls a good library, Shakespeare and the Bible.

We look out tonight on a windy, stormy sky. Dark clouds go scudding by, and the wind whistles through our frail tenement. The boards have shrunk until daylight shines through. Lightning flashes continuously, thunder is rolling overhead, and the whole prairie is ablaze with the fireflies, weaving in and out like fairy shuttles.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Aug. 16:* We went to church this morning at a tumbledown schoolhouse called Liberty expecting to hear the funeral sermon of Mrs. Alexander, who was a near neighbor. The poor woman has been dead four months, and her husband married again six weeks after her death. But he says he is "determined to pay proper respect to dear Mary and so will have her funeral preached," with the new wife sitting decorously near to hear it. It was the oddest-looking crowd one could imagine, and the very funniest dressing we ever saw. My pen is powerless to describe it: one girl airy in pink tarleton and another sweltering in red woolen; high horn combs with long ribbon streamers waving from the top; immense hoops; and strand after strand of beads, all colors, wound around their necks. Many of the men were barefooted, and nearly all of their slouched wool hats were decorated with ribbons or an artificial flower. There were few coats but many vests and a display of homemade knit galluses. It was a most unusual-looking crowd, all sitting on puncheons laid on supports, some of them constantly slipping down.

When Johnny goes out to see the people on business, he always brings back some amusing anecdote. One man wanted to know what *creek* Milliken's Bend was on. Johnny was looking at a house with a view to renting it and asked the man how many rooms it had. "Why four," he said. "Two boarded up and the hall and gallery." The most common query addressed to Mamma is, "Don't you smoke?" and "How much do you charge for making that 'ar hat?" We have made some pretty plaits of wheat and rye straw and hats for several of the girls around. Johnny, passing the place where Morine is hired, saw her sitting at the table with the white folks. She will be ruined by such people.

A Mrs. Slaughter has spent the day with us. She is a pleasant lady, but quite on the style of Mrs. Manlove, whom she knows and heartily dislikes. Capt. Manlove is her cousin. She once lived in Vicksburg, and she and Mamma have many mutual acquaintances.

Miss Mary Moran, Mrs. Smith's niece, is home again, and Mrs. Smith is at Mr. Vaughn's to weave the cloth spun by the servants. Mrs. Smith claims half for the weaving, though Mamma could hire it woven for four bits a day. It will make Mamma's goods come to about \$4 a yard, while Mrs. Smith will get hers at the rate of fifty cents. Mamma shall not try it again. It is disagreeable for the two families to be forced to live together, and we will be thankful when we get a house to ourselves.

A long letter from Sarah Wadley with a good deal of news, but principally about the staff, Gen. Walker's command having again camped near them. Our troops are still at Monroe, and there is some attempt being made to fortify the town. The Wadleys will not move until October, and the Barrs are still there. Miss Sarah should be high on our list of friends since she is the first to write. I have just written to Mrs. Hardison and Annie Amis and enclosed both in Mamma's business letter to Mr. Guisenberg.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] Aug. 30: We are at home again after an absence of ten days on a visit to poor Mrs. Carson at Tyler. She feels her husband's death

most deeply and has grieved herself sick. We found her very ill and looking dreadful, but when we left we had the happiness of seeing her much improved. Her depression affects her health, and she is such a frail, helpless person.

Dr. Carson died suddenly, though he had been ill for some months. He seemed not to have realized the gravity of his situation and died without leaving any instructions or alluding to his death in any way. A good and upright man has gone to his reward. He was the best man and the best Christian I have ever known and had led a most helpful and blameless life. Many will mourn his death, and we have lost a friend tried and true. His life had been one long preparation to meet his Saviour, and so Death could not affright him. Mrs. Carson is so desolate and friendless. She has set her heart on our two families living together. She has already rented a two-room cottage with all necessary out-buildings about a mile from Tyler, and she says by taking the two kitchen rooms for the boys and for a dining room we can get on all right. Considering that we have no furniture, it looks like four rooms would house us.

The children on both sides are delighted with the idea. Jimmy, Eddie, and Katie Carson, and Jimmy, Johnny, and Little Sister will fill a small house, but it is the only arrangement that up to this time has seemed at all feasible. And surely we can all get on peaceably together. Jimmy and Eddie are charming boys and willing to do anything to get Johnny and Jimmy with them. Jimmy is a splendid-looking boy. He is getting over his extreme shyness and is trying to take Joe and Willy's place. Dr. Carson's place no one can ever fill. He has left such immense business interests with only the overseers to take charge of them and several hundred Negroes to be housed, clothed, and made self-supporting.

We boarded in Tyler with a Mr. Morrill and had to pay \$44 for the privilege and \$15 for feed for the mules. Mrs. Carson's bill at the same place will be stunning.

I must record the first instance of liberality that has come under our notice since entering the state. The first night after leaving Tyler we stayed at a Mr. Fowler's, a very nice

place, and they did not charge us a cent. But we were picked up the next night. We lost our way and traveled until 8 o'clock when we asked to stay at a pretty, large, white house, white only on the outside. I despair of giving any idea of the dirt. We tried to eat without seeing or tasting and to sleep without touching the bed. They gave us coffee, a horrid decoction of burnt wheat and milk without sugar, in saucers and water in the halves of broken bottles. The table was set in the dirtiest of kitchens with a dirt floor and half a dozen half-naked little Negroes and numberless cats and dogs scampering through the room and under the table. The rafters were festooned with old hoop skirts and worn-out, rough boots. It surpassed any place we have been in yet. We certainly had found the dark corner of the Confederacy.

We lost our way again one evening and traveled until way in the night, through a wild woods road dotted with stumps. But it was cool and bright moonlight and really more pleasant than a stuffy dirty room, but the mules and Hoccles did not enjoy it.

Our next adventure was not so pleasant. The mules were rushing down a long, rocky, red hill—Hoccles is a wretched driver and lets them do pretty much as they please—when crash! over went the Jersey, and we rolled out on the ground, along with a confused medley of baskets, bundles, palmetto, corn, bonnets, and boxes. Fortunately no serious damage was done, and after a few repairs to the Jersey we journeyed on. Hoccles is a right good tinker for wagons. But our troubles were not yet over. The mules were trotting briskly along through the white sand, Mamma was asleep sitting in the foot of the Jersey, and I was knitting away, when there was a sudden cluck and tearing sound. I looked up to see the whole top of our devoted Jersey folding back like a fan. While Hoccles was nodding in the sultry heat, we had run into a tree and broken the top nearly entirely off. Mamma gave a groan and exclaimed, "Now Hoccles, just run us over a stump and break the wheels and maybe you will be satisfied. You have broken the bottom racing down the hill. But that would not do you. You had to go and break the top.

Now run over a rock and break the wheels and you will be fixed!" I could not help laughing. It was funny in spite of our bad plight, and poor Hoccles looked so humble and apologetic. We thought he would be forced to take the entire top off, but he was equal to the emergency. With hammer, nail, and strings, he patched it up so it lasted until we reached home. But it is a most forlorn, lopsided affair. If we just had our own good carriage, but we hear it is a smallpox ambulance now.

Our last day we just missed driving over the largest rattlesnake, stretched across the road basking in the sun. It was larger than my arm and had twelve rattles. That frightened us most of all. It might have glided into the carriage as we drove over it.

When we reached home we found Mrs. Smith's family in great distress. Her cousin, Mrs. Vaughn, was dead after a short illness. Mrs. Vaughn had been to see us the evening before we left, seemingly in perfect health. She leaves six little children. Her husband and the two older children, Kitty and Bobby, were away when death came. She was so cheerful and full of life. "Verily in the midst of life we are in death."

A long letter from Julia Street was awaiting me, giving an account of Mary's marriage and their life in Camden. She says she hates Arkansas and wants to come to Texas. I am sure she will hate this state ten times more. If she is a wise girl, she will stay where she is as long as possible. The more we see of the people, the less we like them, and every refugee we have seen feels the same way. They call us all *renegades* in Tyler. It is strange the prejudice that exists all through the state against refugees. We think it is envy, just pure envy. The refugees are a nicer and more refined people than most of those they meet, and they see and resent the difference. That is the way we flatter ourselves.

We saw Mr. Wylie on our way up and were nearly glad enough to kiss him, though he was never more than an acquaintance, but the sight of a familiar face was so pleasant.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] Sept. 1: Johnny started yesterday with one of the wagons to Monroe, a

month's trip, but he went off in high spirits. A letter from Jimmy at Jefferson [Texas]⁷⁰ on the thirty-first of July, just as he was leaving for Navasota. It is almost time for his return, and Mamma is anxious for him to get back. She wants the wagons to move the Negroes before they hear that the Yankees are coming in from the North, as it is rumored, and before they have a chance to make a break for the Federal lines again.

There are quite a number of Yankee prisoners at Tyler, captured while in command of black troops.⁷¹ It does seem like they ought to be hanged, and they are so impudent too. The detestable creatures!

There is a rumor that Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, and Tennessee have applied for admission into the Union again. Of course, we know it is a base fabrication, but many of the natives believe it firmly. They will believe anything against Louisiana. They seem to hate that state, and we would not give one Louisiana parish for half of Texas.

Our pet rumor is again in the air that France, Spain, and England have recognized the Confederacy. Oh, that it were true.

Mamma and I are busy altering my dresses. The one Mrs. Carson gave me will be a comfort, the only thick dress I have.

We hear that Mrs. White, from whom we rented books and also bought one or two, has *leprosy*. It makes us shiver to think of it, and our handling her things and Patsy nursing her. We can only hope it is another big story, as it is too late to take precautions.

⁷⁰ In south central Marion County, Jefferson was founded in 1836. Located on Big Cypress Creek which empties into Red River, Jefferson became the principal river port in Texas. During the Civil War a meat cannery and a shoe factory were located there.—*Handbook of Texas*, I, 909.

⁷¹ These were probably prisoners captured by Walker's division in an expedition from Delhi, La., to Goodrich's Landing late in June, 1863. Walker's report stated: "This fort or mound, near Goodrich's Landing, was garrisoned by negro troops for the purpose of raiding and destroying everything that could assist any of our troops. They devoted their time, headed by their officers (white men), in burning private residences, corn-cribs, cotton, etc." He captured 1,200 Negro troops and twelve white officers.—Blessington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 114.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Sept. 3:* Mamma and I are busy remodeling a secondhand green silk. I will be forced to take off mourning this winter since I can get nothing black to wear. We are thankful for any kind of cloth.

Miss Mary Moran knows so many old songs, ballads sung by our grandmothers—"Barbara Allen," "Willy over the Lea," and suchlike. She sings for our amusement nearly every night.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Sept. 11:* Jimmy is back after an absence of seven weeks, and now as soon as we can collect up our scattered goods and chattels we will be off to fresh fields and pastures new. Jimmy's trip proved a grand success. He met with little bad luck and made more than Mamma expected, but alas, he brought nothing that we sent for in the way of clothes. And clothes are a subject of vital interest, as our raiment is waxing thin and prices are so enormous that it is difficult to get barest necessities. He did bring me one pair of \$30 peg shoes, regular clodhoppers, but I expect I shall be glad to have them yet.

Jimmy is looking very well, much improved by the trip. He met and heard from several of our friends. He saw Mrs. Tom Scott and Amelia near Shreveport, moving to Winnsboro [Tex.]. Mrs. Scott has lost most of her Negroes. They ran to the Yankees from Monroe when she started to move them. She has only three men left. He met Mr. Curry and got Ashburn's watch from him.

The Federals made only a short stay at Monroe, but were busy at the work of destruction. Would like to know how our friends have fared.

Our high hopes of recognition by the European powers are again dashed to the ground. If they just would not start such rumors, raising expectations only to be disappointed.

We paid a three-day visit to Mrs. Slaughter up in the famous Union neighborhood, Honey Grove,⁷² where they say there is only one Confederate family. There, everyone you

⁷² A small community in east central Fannin County, settled in 1824, and named for a grove of bee trees.

talk to says of course we will be conquered. In Louisiana one rarely heard such an idea expressed.

We attended a large Baptist meeting in the vicinity several times. The interest and excitement were intense. There were often fifty mourners crowded around the altar and the church crowded to suffocation. Never saw so many men in church before, and we have not seen so many men at one time since the war commenced, unless they were soldiers in uniform. The scene at night was most striking: the anxious, excited faces, crowding and surging around the altar; the exalted, earnest mien of the minister; the groans and shrieks and wild prayers of the mourners, mingling with the shouts and hallelujahs of the newly professed; while high over all rises the thunder of a triumphant hymn, borne on many voices. In the background gleam the eager, curious faces of the lookers-on, row on row. A scene to thrill and interest anyone, but I must take my religion more quietly. It was a country-looking congregation with a sprinkling of nice people. Short dresses, large hoops, and top-knotted sun-bonnets, the style.

Belle Slaughter is to be married very soon to a widower with three children. Her present home does not seem a happy one.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Sept. 14*: Our affairs are in a state of confusion worse confounded. All our plans were nipped in the bud by Mr. Smith's being taken to camp to serve in the militia in spite of Gen. Smith's detail. Everything is at a standstill with us. Mrs. Smith insulted the men who came for Mr. Smith, and so they waylaid him and took him off to camp, not allowing him even to come by home and get a change of clothes. Mrs. Smith was deadly angry, and an ironical message from one of Mr. Smith's captors has made her rabid. Her abuse of everything and everybody in Texas is eloquent. We were to have started to Tyler. Mr. Smith was going to Shreveport on important business for Mamma, Mrs. Smith and Miss Mary were going to live at Mr. Vaughn's and take charge of his children, but all our plans have come to naught.

I hear the crickets and see the stars so the storm must have passed us by, and we will not sleep under a dripping roof.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Sept. 19*: A most pleasant surprise this morning. Uncle Johnny, his wife, and baby arrived at our Retreat. They are fleeing from the Yankees in Arkansas⁷³ and are on their way to Austin, where Uncle Johnny hopes to edit a newspaper. They came 150 miles out of their route to see us. His wife, Kate, is a sweet, innocent-looking woman. She looks about sixteen, though she is twenty-one. The baby, Sally, is the tiniest mite of a creature. Texas air will have to do much for her before she gets a strong hold on life. We will be here several weeks longer, and this new family will be a great pleasure. We can at least talk to the newcomers, and Mamma and I have about exhausted all our well-worn topics.

Mamma thinks now affairs are entrain to get Mr. Smith again detailed by paying \$500 and swearing she is in need of his services. Mamma went Thursday all the way to Charleston, the militia camp, to get Mr. Smith released. She met there her Paris friend, Gen. Smith, who was very polite and who really seemed to wish to do her a kindness. He will do all in his power to get Mr. Smith off. He is the second man we have met in Texas who seemed to have good will for refugees and sympathy for their troubles. If the officers had any sense, they could see that Mamma is forced to have someone to manage for her. Mamma and Miss Mary saw a funny set at Charleston.

We have had a succession of callers recently. The unadulterated natives are all eager to hire Negroes. There is a furor for them. All the old ladies in the county are falling sick just to get their "Old Men" to hire a servant. Who can blame them after their years of grinding toil for seeking a little rest?

⁷³ General Price evacuated Little Rock, August 5, 1863, and withdrew to Camden. Military stores were moved from Camden later that month. Little Rock fell September 10, 1863.—David Y. Thomas, *Arkansas in War and Reconstruction, 1861-1874* (Little Rock, 1926), 218.

Uncle Johnny has given us several new books, at least new to us, as we have had nothing recent since the war commenced. *A Strange Story*,⁷⁴ *No Name*,⁷⁵ and *The Step-Sister*. Then, he has quite a number of magazines, and I promise myself a treat of reading them, something I do not already know by heart.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Sept. 20*: Uncle Johnny was at Richmond, Va., a month ago and heard from nearly every member of the family. How thankful we are to know that they are all alive, though perhaps in distress. My Brother was neither killed nor hurt in the Pennsylvania campaign. Uncle Bo is as usual in fine health and spirits and is under Bragg. Dr. Buckner and Brother Coley are also with Gen. Bragg, and Aunt Laura is at Chattanooga within reach of Dr. Buckner. How glad we are that she is comfortably settled and not suffering all the discomforts of life in Texas. We have not a clear idea of where Mr. Miller is, but he is trying to get an appointment as chief of cavalry somewhere. Aunt Sarah is at Bladen Springs, Ala. Poor little Horace is dead, a most bitter blow to his mother. He was her favorite. She was keeping house at Cooper's Well when the Yankees marched on Jackson. She just escaped on the last train with only their wearing clothes. Everything else was destroyed by the Yankees, house and furniture burned, piano hacked to pieces, and the portraits torn to shreds. Mr. Miller also lost all his Negroes but fourteen, and they were saved by the fidelity of one of their number. It looks like the whole family is to be ruined, root and branch. Every member of it is broken up and all the women and children fleeing from the Yankees, while all the men and half-grown boys are in the army. We are thankful Mamma has saved most of Uncle Bo's Negroes, and if we can keep what we have now we can help the others. But I have a strong presentiment that we shall yet lose all that we have and be compelled to labor with our hands for our daily bread.

⁷⁴ A novel by Bulwer-Lytton, published in 1862.

⁷⁵ A novel by the popular American novelist, William Wilkie Collins (1824-80).

Mrs. Smith had moved up to Mr. Vaughn's just in time to give room for Uncle Johnny. How glad we are to have a house to ourselves once more. Mrs. Smith was very kind in leaving everything we needed for housekeeping. It is surprising how little one can get on with. We seem to have almost nothing but servants, and yet we are comfortable, comparatively so.

I have finished knitting those tiresome gloves and can read with a clear conscience. Fingered and gauntlet gloves are a trouble to knit.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Sept. 22*: The news today is discouraging. Charleston [S. C.] has fallen,⁷⁶ Louisiana and Arkansas are to be entirely deserted by our troops, and all the available forces of the Trans-Mississippi Department are to be concentrated at Tyler, Texas. If Charleston has fallen, it is because it was not in the power of man to hold it. Everything possible had been done, and it had made a most gallant defense. No disgrace can sully the name of its Gen. Beauregard, as the name of Lovell and Pemberton have been darkened.

Kate and I have been keeping house for the last two days, ably assisted by Little Sister. Mamma and Uncle Johnny are off to Honey Grove, Bonham,⁷⁷ and we know not where else on the troublesome business of securing Mr. Smith's release. As soon as this is effected, we only await Johnny's return to take up our line of march for more hospitable regions and fairer shores. When we are finally away from this land of misery.

⁷⁶ Although Charleston was being attacked by the Federal Navy, it had not fallen.

⁷⁷ Bonham, named for the Alamo hero James Butler Bonham, became the county seat of Fannin County in 1843. At this time Bonham was the headquarters of General Henry E. McCulloch, who was in command of the northeast portion of Texas. Mrs. Stone met General McCulloch at Monroe when he was with Walker's division. He had, in the meantime, been transferred on July 12 from Walker's division then at Alexandria, La., to General Magruder in Texas, and then assigned at Bonham.—Blessington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 127-28.

*The night shall be filled with music
And the cares, that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents, like the Arabs,
And as quietly steal away.*

How I long for a glimpse at Brokenburn these pleasant autumn days—radiant in flowers and crowned with fruit, the grassy yard and tall oaks, the clump of sassafras changing now to bright crimson, and the fragrant sweet gum showering down its leaves of gold, the flower garden sparkling across the grass, its many kinds of fall flowers gay in the mellow September sun, and the wide fields stretching away, white with cotton and vocal with the songs of the busy pickers. Shall we ever see it so again?

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Sept. 26*: Nothing to record. Mamma is still working for Mr. Smith's recall. We are reading, sewing, and taking walks through the numerous little prairie paths, with the thick growing vegetation like a low wall on each side and frequent snakes gliding across. Novels are a great boon in such desert places of life. "We will live with a hope of better days dawning" and resign ourselves to the inevitable. . . .

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] *Oct. 2*: Mamma has gone to Paris on business. Kate and Uncle Johnny are in their room, Sister and Sally [?] are taking an afternoon nap, and there is nothing for me to do but write. Last Monday Kate and I, on shopping cares intent, wended our way to Paris, Uncle Johnny accompanying us as driver, groom, and gentleman-in-waiting. We enlivened the way with "gibe and jest and merry song" and reached there without accident. We took our way at once to the stores and soon managed to spend several hundred dollars for almost nothing, but the articles were indispensable and I bought at any price. But I must confess, on getting home, Mamma did not like a thing I bought, and most will be returned if possible and the rest kept under protest. I am a poor shopper and must have execrable taste. The \$95 dress I bought Mamma is ugly. But it was the only piece of woolen goods in town, and

Mamma has nothing warm for winter. Through with our shopping we went to Mrs. Buckner's hotel for dinner to be stared out of countenance by a score of native cavaliers. Kate and I occupied the same room and Uncle Johnny had to find lodging where he could.

We got a late start next morning with a tired horse and in a drizzling rain, and we had not gone two miles before our bad luck caught up with us. Uncle Johnny took the wrong road, and we soon found it out and urged him to turn around. He avowed his horror of anything like a backward movement and kept on his chosen way, thinking it would lead into the right road. We traveled on for several miles, leaving home farther and farther away, until at last our united persuasions induced him to turn and cut across the country instead of heading straight for Arkansas, as we were doing. After a wearisome ride thorough stubborn thickets and hogwallow prairie, we at last reached the Paris road and went on rejoicing, but our troubles were just beginning. A slow pattering rain set in and the buckshot prairie soil grew heavy and more heavy, and our gallant grey was visibly tired. We got out of the Jersey in the pouring rain to cross Sulphur Creek, the bridge like most Texas bridges being only a trap for the unwary. With wet heads and muddy feet, we climbed in again, congratulating ourselves that we would soon be at home. Vain hope. Night came on apace, wrapped in her sable mantle and unbrightened by a star, and we were still four miles from our own hearthstone with a horse only able to drag on in a slow walk. Again we took the wrong road and wandered off on what looked in the uncertain light like a boundless prairie with not a house or road in sight. Again as in the morning we begged Uncle Johnny to turn back to the right road, but true to his expressed principles he refused. We journeyed on, leaving the horse to find his way and straining our eyes to discern a light, but the only lights were those shining up through the tangled grass, the countless glowworms with their gleaming crests. At last plodding along in the Egyptian darkness, the horse gave out entirely, and *bon gré mal gré*, we were forced to camp out.

We picketed out the poor horse and wrapped ourselves in

bolts of calico and woolen, for we had not a wrap of any kind and it had grown very chilly. Crouching in the Jersey, we resigned ourselves to sweet slumber, but nature's kind restorer, balmy sleep, was safely sheltered in warm homesteads and was not to be coaxed out on the bleak cold prairie. Twisting and turning we wore the hours away until we discovered that the horse was off picket, and such a chase as Uncle Johnny had to catch him, while we had visions of wandering lost on the prairie for days. As soon as the first tints of day crimsoned the east, Uncle Johnny set off for home to bring relief to two distressed damsels. The horse was too spent to take us all home. How we laughed at the figure Uncle Johnny presented when he started off with a cushion for a saddle. Kate and I at once went to sleep. Jimmy found us cuddled down in the bottom of the Jersey fast asleep when several hours later he came to our relief with a fresh horse. We reached home at last just before dinner, two forlorn-looking wights and very hungry.

["Elysian Fields," Lamar County, Tex.] Oct. 8: The last few days have been full of interest. First, Johnny returned only last night, and this opens the gates of release from this region of sin and woe. We think we can get off on Monday. Uncle Johnny has been awaiting only Johnny's return to move on, and they will start on their long journey on Saturday—over 300 miles. Thus Johnny's arrival has been the signal trumpet calling us all to horse and away.

A letter from Julia in which she says My Brother was twice severely wounded in his right arm in the battle of Gettysburg.⁷⁸ He has recovered and is with his command but has lost the use of his right hand. We are truly thankful it is no worse. If we could only hear all that has happened to him since seeing him last, but we know so little. Poor fellow, this is his fifth wound and the most severe of all. We so hope he can get a furlough this fall. It worries me to hear of Tom Manlove's frolicking about, getting married and enjoying himself in every way, getting all the honor, while

⁷⁸ July 1-3, 1863.

My Brother, who is worth ten of him, gets only the hard work of the camp and the wounds. As the Psalmist says, "Promotion cometh neither from the East nor from the West." But I wish it would come from the powers that be. I can write and think myself into a fever about My Brother.

Julia is still at Camden. All wagons have been impressed to remove government stores, and so they cannot get away. She heard through Robert Norris, who wrote asking news of his aunt, that Uncle Bo is well and is now a 1st lieutenant. We are so glad of his promotion. Not a word of Brother Coley, and we are very anxious about him. Joe Carson is regimental colorbearer, a dangerous post. Julia sends much pleasant nonsense and flattering speech from herself and Carrie Lowry and directions for a new headdress direct from Nashville. It is called "the Rebel," and we shall make one as soon as feasible.⁷⁹

Johnny came through Tyler. Mrs. Carson is established in her house, is quite ill, and is worrying herself worse in looking for Mamma to come on. She is more than ever determined on the plan. Mrs. Col. Buckner and two of her children died recently in Tyler. A sweet, bright woman, one of our neighbors out on the river. Her death is sad, so far from home. I think I could not rest buried in this strange, unfriendly land. She leaves one little girl and her husband who is somewhere in the service.

Johnny saw a gentleman who had seen Dr. Nailor in Vicksburg. He said that Dr. Nailor seemed nearly crazy and that he had lost everything and was then trying to get a horse to ride on ten miles in the country to see his daughter Kate, who was very ill. How my heart aches for them all. If I could only see dear Kate, my first and best friend. I pray that God may spare her life and that we may meet again.

Johnny gives a dreadful account of affairs in and around Delhi and Monroe. Most of the citizens remaining boast

⁷⁹ The *Southern Illustrated News* carried a column of correspondence between "Secessia" and "Refugitta" in which "Secessia" wrote from Baltimore of fashions and hair styles beyond the blockade.—Massey, *Ersatz in the Confederacy*, 96.

of being Unionists and carry on a most profitable trade with Vicksburg. The Yankee cavalry came out to Monroe by invitation, and a number of citizens signed a petition asking them to come out and drive away our soldiers still there. This is too disgraceful to be true. Then, a great number of Louisianians have deserted. My cheek crimsones as I write this of our own beloved state, but I cannot believe that she has brought her name to be a disgrace and reproach to her loyal children.

Johnny went to see Mrs. Savage. She is quite disgusted with life in Texas but speaks of moving on to Tyler to be near Mamma and Mrs. Carson. We certainly hope she will. The Wadleys have changed their plans and will attempt the trip to Georgia, though they risk losing everything in crossing the river.

Too tired to write of our last trip to Honey Grove and that disgusting Dr. P., the blue man but *n'importe*.

["Refugee Ranch," Tyler, Tex.] Oct. 29: We have been at Tyler⁸⁰ scarcely long enough to feel settled, and the first thing is a grand disturbance that threatens all our plans.

It seems there is a great prejudice existing here against the unfortunate refugees, a feeling strong in Mr. Kaiser's school that made Jimmy and Eddie Carson very unpopular. There was no open outbreak, however, until Jimmy and Johnny were entered as pupils. For several days the disaffected could find no open cause of offense, and our boys, perfectly unsuspecting, rode, walked, hunted, and marched together perfectly happy to renew their old friendships and not dreaming they were making enemies. But all this was the head and front of their offending. When they added to this "wearing gold watch chains and black broadcloth"—a slender little strand of gold and a secondhand suit of clothes—the Tyler boys could stand no more, and they rose in their

⁸⁰ Tyler, named for President John Tyler, became the county seat of Smith County when it was organized in 1846. By 1860 Smith County had a population of 12,392 whites and 4,882 slaves. Tyler became an important supply point during 1863, having a commissary, an iron foundry, and an ammunition plant.—*Handbook of Texas*, II, 627 and 814.

wrath to put down those "refugee upstarts," most unaffected little fellows. They opened hostilities by sticking pins in Jimmy and Johnny at church during the prayer. Whereat Johnny was so enraged that he challenged the boy to come out of the church at once and fight, but the boy excused himself as he had a lady with him. They made an appointment to meet the next day and have a regular fisticuffs. The boy failed to keep the promise, and Jimmy denounced the act at school as ungentlemanly. The fuss blew over without coming to blows, the boys agreeing not to speak to each other, and they thought everything was settled. But the father of the boy came to school very angry and told Mr. Kaiser that unless Jimmy Stone was dismissed from school all the other boys would be taken away. Several boys wore pistols to school today, and they had formed a plan to mob Jimmy last night, but as I was with him they put it off.

We knew nothing of all this until Mr. Kaiser came over this evening to advise Mamma and Mrs. Carson to keep the boys inside the yard and to make Jimmy Carson take off the chain and put on rough clothes. Mr. Kaiser has acted a very cowardly part. The boys have been taken from school, and Mamma and Mrs. Carson are trying to get a private tutor for them. Jimmy Stone was studying hard since he knows his school days are short. Mr. Kaiser is a time-server.

I took a charming ride on Jimmy Carson's horse, accompanied by most of the boys.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Oct. 30:* The Tyler boys are trying to force Jimmy Carson into a fight. Half a dozen of them are going armed for him, and we are very anxious. Mamma and Mrs. Carson have made our boys promise they will not be first to start a row. They restrain themselves but they are boiling with rage. Mamma will not let Jimmy go to church as she hears the Tyler boys intend mobbing him, and Jimmy is in a dreadful state of mind. He says they will all call him a coward. We do not care what these rowdy roughs call our boys, just so they do not all get into a free fight with pistols. If it was only fisticuff, we would let them fight it out. Mrs. Carson went to see Mr. Williams, the father of the ring-

leader, and we hope her pacific representations to him will calm the excitement.

Jimmy Stone has behaved as well as a boy could, with firmness but moderation. I do not think he has even been angry until tonight, when Mamma forbid his going to church unless she or I went with him. And he has not put on a pistol until this morning, though he has known for several days that half a dozen boys are wearing pistols to "do him up," as they say. The entire household is wrought up and Jimmy is furious. He says he intends to shoot down the first boy tomorrow who says a harsh word to him. Mrs. Carson is a strong member of the peace party and has forbidden either of her boys to go to Tyler on any pretext whatever. This restraint chafes the boys extremely but is a most necessary one, excited and angry as all the boys are. Johnny and Eddie had been wearing pistols days before we knew there was any trouble. How little we can know what is in the heart of a boy. Here we were, so pleased with their innocent sports, thinking them absorbed in their marbles and horses and marching around, when every boy was expecting a deadly encounter and burning with hatred for his enemies. We were praising Johnny for his devotion to study when he insisted on going to school one day when Mamma thought him too unwell. We found out afterwards they were expecting a battle royal that day and Johnny had an appointment to fight. I hope Mr. Kaiser, for his cowardly truckling in dismissing Jimmy without cause, will lose his school.

I am glad it is a general refugee quarrel instead of being confined to Jimmy. Edward Levy and George Grissman, refugee boys, have both had to leave school.

The house is filled with Mrs. Carson's lawyer and overseers. She is having her affairs arranged for the first time since Dr. Carson's death.

Mamma has been busy remodeling and making bonnets. She has excellent ideas on the subject, and we tell her a first-class milliner was spoiled when she turned to other pursuits. Her bonnet is quite a triumph, a regular "skyscraper" of straw and silk. She finished mine today, a pretty mixture of

black velvet and cherry. It is the same I sported at Monroe in uniform with Julia Barr and Shirley Crith [?], but it is much improved by the addition of the bright color. I have been forced to take off black. None to be bought.

I am still on the weary treadmill of work, work, work that commenced at Monroe. Our sewing seems endless. We have been hard at it for nearly six months and the end is not yet. Mamma bought two calicoes for me, one at \$55 and the other \$66. One is made and I am sewing on the last one. We still have two drill dresses to make over. Jimmy is without winter underclothes, and we cannot buy a piece of woolen. We fear in such thin clothes he will take pneumonia again.

[Tyler, Tex.] Nov. 1: We are just from church. Jimmy, Johnny, and I did not go *con amore*. There are more pleasant things than toiling a mile through heavy sand, up hill and down dale—too dark to see the road beneath you or the sky above, sitting for an hour listening to an indifferent sermon, and being gazed at by a battery of hostile eyes. Jimmy was determined to go and I would go too, though he did not want me. Last night he and Johnny went alone, and during the services someone cut his bridle all to pieces and stole his martingale and blanket. A crowd of boys followed them after church, talking at them all the time. They know now the boys are armed and so did not attack them. The rowdies followed us tonight and I saw them for the first time. They are real nice-looking lads. What a pity they are not gentlemen. Jimmy Carson is deeply mortified that he is compelled to desert a friend in need.

Miss Sally Grissman called to see us a short time ago. She is quite pretty, a Creole, piquante and petite. They are from Assumption Parish ⁸¹ and have been here nearly a year. Mrs. Prentice from Joe's Bayou and Mrs. Hull from St. Louis called yesterday. Mrs. Hull is a delightful little lady with the prettiest face and sweetest manner. Her husband is a colonel. He has just returned from Missouri. He went in to raise a regiment, of course in disguise, and brought out four hundred men, a most dangerous undertaking since it meant

⁸¹ South of Baton Rouge.

the death of a spy if he had been captured. Mr. and Mrs. Prentice have a house near town and Mrs. Hull boards with them. Mrs. Prentice begged me to come and stay some with her. Perhaps I shall.

Spent a day with Mrs. Levy lately. She is from New Orleans and has a large family of little children. Her husband and oldest son are in the Virginia Army. She is a good talker, a woman of the world, and a Jewess, but I think does not practice her religion. She was a Miss Moise from Charleston.

Jimmy yesterday had a letter from Mr. Clarkson asking for news of Ben. Jimmy has not heard from him since March and could write little of comfort. Our last direct news was in the spring, and now it is November. We fear all three of our loved ones were in Bragg's last great battle. We know Longstreet's corps was engaged. It is reported that Lee and Meade have had another fight, but nothing definite. We can only pray for their lives to be spared.

The exhilarating news of the capture of Rosecrans and his army proves to have been a canard. He has been heavily reinforced and is again in the field. What credulous mortals we be, believing all the good reports and distrusting all the bad until the truth is forced upon us. Gen. Blount, the man who vowed bloody vengeance against Texas because he was whipped here several years ago for inciting an insurrection, has been killed, and we in this section can rest in peace at least for the time. Quantrill did Texas that one good service.⁸²

Mamma and Mrs. Carson have subscribed for several papers.

Willy Carson must have reached his destination before

⁸² Perhaps a reference to General James G. Blunt, who was active in the Federal conquest of Arkansas and Missouri in 1862-63. If so, he was not killed as here reported. An ardent abolitionist, Blunt was born in Maine, practiced medicine in Ohio, and lived in Kansas during the bloody decade before the war.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 447-48; *Dictionary of American Biography*, XV, 294. According to James Farber, Quantrill operated in north Texas in the latter part of 1863. General McCulloch arrested him at Bonham, but Quantrill escaped. Allegedly he operated in northeast Louisiana and southern Arkansas afterwards.—James Farber, *Texas C. S. A.* (New York, 1947), 221-23.

this. He was at home on furlough when we came but left in a few days. He looked dreadful—such a slight, boyish fellow.

We were nearly a week coming down from the prairie [Lamar Co.], and the children enjoyed the trip greatly. Kitty and Bobby Vaughn were with us, and they were all in a perpetual romp. But those white sandy roads and long rocky hills are dreadful when one is shut up in a Jersey, innocent of springs and driven by a little boy who manages to hit nearly every rock and stump.

We spent one day at Mrs. Fowler's, and they were very kind to us. But for the pony Johnny bought the day before we left, Jimmy would have had nothing to ride, as he failed in getting a horse. Mamma gave the pony to me, and we named it Red Rebel. But it is too small for my riding and we will sell it. Wish we could afford to keep it for Sister. Her eyes are still inflamed. She has been unable to read for a month. Sore eyes are one of the curses of Texas.⁸³

Mr. Kaiser is domineering and not altogether pleasant. Mamma and Mrs. Carson had about determined for him to seek another home, but the opportune present of half a dozen ducks, fruits of a long hunt, has mollified them. I tell them they are open to bribery. Sister and Katie are inseparable and Mamma and Mrs. Carson are very congenial and talk together by the hour. The boys are the greatest cronies. It is rather inconvenient receiving company in one's bedroom, but if we had a sitting room we would not have even chairs to put in it. It does not look like we will be crowded with company. Not a native man or lady has called.

[Tyler, Tex.] Nov. 7: There are some changes in our household. Mr. Kaiser has left us after his school left him. He has gone seven miles in the country to open another school. May it prove more successful than this attempt. We have forgiven him for his desertion of Jimmy. He cannot help being a coward. He remarked pathetically to Mrs. Carson, speaking of the big boys of the school, that he felt he was on the mouth of a volcano. We have no teacher and

⁸³ Probably "pinkeye," an acute, highly contagious variety of conjunctivitis.

no prospect of one. Mamma is speaking seriously of going on to live in Gilmore [Gilmer, Tex. ?] to put Jimmy in school, but I hope she will not.⁸⁴ There are so many refugees here that we may like Tyler after awhile, and the next school the boys may be able to attend.

We spent a day with Mrs. Prentice and Mrs. Hull. Col. Hull was at home—a splendid-looking, tall, dark, young officer, something like Tom Manlove, and quiet and reserved. Like most soldiers, he dislikes to talk of his adventures or the war.

Yesterday afternoon we went on a refugee hunt and called on a Mrs. Blackmore, who has a very sick child. They are from Homer [La.] and could tell us a good many items of our friends there. Went on to see Mrs. Col. Hill from Little Rock [Ark.]. She is a waspish, opinionated, little blonde person, while her husband is as jolly and good-natured looking a 200 pounds as you would wish to see. Wanted to call on Miss Bocage of Arkansas but could not find the house. Returned Miss Grissman's call. The house looked rather happy-go-lucky, and Mrs. Grissman was keeping up a row in the back regions. Fancied we would not care to make them a long visit.

Two of the citizens, Dr. Lawrence's daughter and sister, called on us. I was out riding and so missed seeing them. Sent Mrs. Hull word we are two ahead of her. My pride made me ride Eddie's horse instead of Willy's, as it is so much the handsomer. Though pride did not have a fall, it got an awful jolting and bruising. So rough that I have been stiff ever since. The Carson boys are very kind, loaning their horses to me at any time.

Several letters this week. One from Uncle Johnny at Austin. He secured his situation but says everything is very high, wood \$40 a cord. A letter from Sarah Wadley just as they were leaving for Georgia. Hope they succeeded in running the blockade and crossing the river in safety. I

⁸⁴ Gilmer, made county seat of Upshur County in 1846, was the site of Morgan H. Looney's school, which was established in 1861 and which became one of the best-known early schools in Texas.—*Handbook of Texas*, I, 692.

do not wish for letters. Have such a fear of bad news. The sight of a letter turns me sick with apprehension.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Nov. 9*: I cannot realize Brother Walter's death. He seems no further away than the others, and I involuntarily think of him as returning with Brother Coley and My Brother. And they may be all together now in the gardens of Paradise.

Just finished *The Barrington Sketches*—a rollicking life they led, a picture of old Irish life.⁸⁵ Now on *Mahomet and His Successors*, by Irving so it must be good.⁸⁶ I walked up to see Mrs. Levy. She is kind and pleasant, but Mrs. Carson has a prejudice against her. Mrs. Carson will not send for her to spend the day, and we have no carriage.

Sister and Katie are taking music lessons and walk to town every morning to practice.

Mrs. Carson still clings to her river custom of riding every day. Mamma dubs it a horrid bore, as Mrs. Carson always wants her as company. I go occasionally and enjoy it. Mamma is hard at work lately sewing with Adeline's assistance. I have just finished stitching a set of the primest linen collars that make me look an old maid before my time. I like the soft grace of lace or tulle, but Mrs. Carson admires the stiffest and whitest of their kind. The boys, particularly the two youngest, are running wild. They never tire of romping and are just overflowing with life, the pure joy of living. Sister and Katie would go the even tenor of their way in peace, if only their cats were dead. Their solicitude in trying to keep them away from the boys injures their rest. It is like touching fire to tinder for a boy to even touch a cat. There is an explosion at once.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Nov. 13*: This week Mrs. Carson, the little girls, and I are alone. Mamma has gone to Shreveport, taking Eddie Carson with her. Mr. Smith is again taken into the militia, thanks to Maj. Little's dislike of refugees, and Mamma has gone to the headquarters of Gen. Kirby

⁸⁵ By Sir Johan Barrington (1760–1834).

⁸⁶ By Washington Irving (1783–1859), published in 1850.

Smith to try to get a permanent discharge for Mr. Smith.⁸⁷ The turnout for the trip was essentially Texas: the high Jersey with white body and black curtains and two shaggy mules with shuck collars. It was anything but stylish. They say pride must have a fall, and ours has had many a tumble since we left home. How I hope Mamma will be able to buy a carriage this trip. Jimmy has gone to the prairie to stay during Mr. Smith's absence. He started off with a dreadful toothache, on a rough little mule. Hope he will return free of toothache and on a horse. We rode with him as far as the Yankee camp. Mamma had some business with the commanding officer, and we went out with her. A number of the prisoners escaped the other day, and the townspeople are very apprehensive of their burning the town. They put out guards every night, and they take turns in guarding the prisoners. One of the prisoners was shot yesterday for disobedience of orders. He died in a few hours.⁸⁸

Jimmy Carson and Johnny are off on a grand hunting frolic. Johnny begged off from going with Mamma and Eddie gladly took his place.

A letter from Anna Dobbs says Uncle Bo was wounded at Chickamauga,⁸⁹ is off on sick leave, but will soon be all right. Dear fellow, how I wish he could be with us. This is his first wound though he has been in service since May, 1861. Robert Norris fell on the same bloody field, horribly mangled by a shell, on the evening of the third day's battle. He was one

⁸⁷ Major General Edmund Kirby Smith succeeded General T. H. Holmes as commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department in March, 1863, and moved his headquarters from Alexandria to Shreveport in the fall of 1863. He had few more than 40,000 troops to defend the department, and there was much criticism of his deployment of them.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 454-59.

⁸⁸ Camp Ford, about three miles northeast of Tyler, was built in 1863 to hold Federal prisoners. It and Camp Groce, near Hempstead, Tex., were the most important prisons west of the Mississippi. Camp Ford was fenced with sixteen-foot poles, and the grounds included ten acres with log houses for the prisoners. Sixteen guards were on duty during the day and thirty-two at night.—Albert Woldert, *A History of Tyler and Smith County, Texas* (San Antonio, 1948), 38-41. For pictures of Federal prisoners at Camp Ford, see *The Photographic History of the Civil War* (New York, 1911), VII, 49 and 51.

⁸⁹ Chickamauga, Ga., September 19-20, 1863.

of our best friends and a good boy. Many pleasant memories gather round his name. Sweet be his rest and a bright reward in the great hereafter.

Anna was to be married on the fifth of November to Dr. Meagher, a match we prophesied long ago. May her happiness be complete. Surely smiles and tears follow each other in quick succession. Death does not seem half so terrible as it did long ago. We have grown used to it. Never a letter but brings news of the death of someone we knew. Another girlhood friend off the list, but none do I regret like Kate Nailor, the first and best.

A letter from Mr. Williams to Mrs. Carson says that neither Joe nor Brother Coley were in the battle of Chickamauga and both were well on October 10, for which we are truly thankful. We have written them many letters but had none from them in answer.

I made my first essay in driving a buggy today, succeeded *à merveille*. I drove Mrs. Carson to town twice today with Brandon as outrider. He was to turn the buggy if I couldn't. She has no horses here, and this is our only way of escaping a species of solitary confinement. Called on Dr. Lawrence's family and heard the piano for the first time in Texas in the familiar piece, "*La Prière d'une Vierge*."

Alone as we are tonight, I feel a little afraid of the escaped Yankees. So I will put out the light, pull the cover over my head, and go to sleep.

[Tyler, Tex.] Nov. 15: I have been promoted to Mamma's post as listener-in-chief to Mrs. Carson. She cannot bear to be alone and must have someone to talk to. Mrs. Carson does not enjoy talking to me as much as she does Mamma, but I am better than nobody.

Col. Buckner took tea the other evening. He is a tall, handsome, blond man with engaging manners and does not seem heartbroken over the death of his wife and children. People live so fast now. We have no time to mourn.

We certainly have plenty of servants to do our bidding, most of Mamma's house servants and all Mrs. Carson's, and that is about all we do have. So little to eat: *biscuit* for

we can get plenty of flour; syrup made of sugar, for we have a hogshead of sugar; and rusty, rancid bacon, absolutely all the meat we have been able to buy, no eggs, chickens, milk, butter, or fresh meat, and not a vegetable. Nothing more to be bought. It seems absurd to have two fine cooks and two dining-room servants and such fare. The Negroes never had so little to do in their lives. We will surely do better in the spring if we can get seed, a cow, and some hens. No fruit but black haws. They are fine, much better than the red haw of the swamp.

The Union candidates at the North are elected and peace, blessed peace as far away as ever.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Dec. 10*: Again we are called on to mourn one of our dearest and best. Brother Coley has crossed the Dark Valley, free from all pain and trouble. He lies at rest and we are desolate indeed. We had heard only the week before that he was well on October 10, when the letter came telling of his death at Clinton, Miss., on September 22. I can do no better than copy Mrs. Bonham's letter to Mamma, telling how nobly and fearlessly a Christian soldier can die.

Clinton, Miss.⁹⁰
Sept. 25th, 1863

My dear Friend:

It is with feelings of deep and heartfelt sorrow that I resume my pen to give you the particulars of the death of your noble son Coleman Stone. He breathed his last at a quarter before ten Tuesday morning, Sept. 22nd. I wrote you a week before his death giving you full particulars up to that time. Then fever set in which with his previous bad health and reduced state and wound combined soon brought him down. The injury, as I stated in my letter, was very serious from the first and never healed as it would have done on a strong, healthy person. Ten days or more before his death I had him moved from the hospital to an office in the yard next me so I could give him constant care. Mrs. Moore was on the other side so some female was with him all the time. I never saw so great a

⁹⁰ Eight miles west of Jackson, Miss.

favorite. Everybody in town was interested in him. Someone was constantly calling to see if they could be of service. As for me, I loved him as a son and grieved for him as one. He was one of the most patient beings under suffering I ever saw.

I watched him three weeks and four days. Most of the time he was suffering the most excruciating pain, but he bore it with the most remarkable firmness, and to you, his mother, I bear the comforting assurance that he died a Christian. The first Sabbath after he came to the hospital I went in the evening to see him fearing he would be lonely and found him reading his Testament. I sat down by him and read aloud for some time. He kept his Bible lying always under his pillow. I used often to take my work and sit by him, and we had many conversations about you, his brothers, and sisters, and his last wish was that he could see you all once more, calling you all by name.

Two days before his death he told me he wished the doctor to tell him his exact condition. He was perfectly calm and composed. The doctor told him there was no chance of his recovery, and said to him, 'Coley, you are a sensible thinking boy and must know the necessity of preparation for another world.' He replied that he did and asked me to send for a minister to converse and pray with him. I at once sent for Mr. Tom Markham, formerly of Vicksburg, who happened to be in this vicinity, and around the couch of that dying soldier boy I passed through some of the most impressive scenes of my life. At sunrise on Tuesday morning, we all knelt around his bed and heard one of the most feeling and beautiful prayers I ever listened to. When I rose and stood by him my hand on his head, he looked in my face and said, 'Mrs. Bonham, I don't think I have ever been a very wicked boy, but since I have been in the army I have been striving to be a Christian, and I believe God has heard my prayers and has answered them. I believe He has forgiven my many sins, pardoned me, and will take me to my home in Heaven. Write to my dear Mother and tell her what I have said to you. I have longed, oh, so much, to see her and my Brothers and Sisters once more, but as I cannot on this earth I trust they will meet me in Heaven.' He was perfectly calm and had his senses up to five minutes before his death. There was no struggle,

no contortion. I stood on one side of him, Mrs. Moore on the other, Dr. Hunt, Mr. Markham, and several others around. I stooped and with sobs and tears pressed a kiss on his brow. He looked in my eyes and said audibly so that all could hear, 'For my Mother.' Again I kissed him and he said, 'For my Sisters.' All were in tears. The strong, stout man who waited on him turned to the window sobbing aloud. Of that good man, that kindhearted friend, I must speak. Mr. Galloway was sent at Coley's request to wait on him. He watched by him day and night with the faithfulness and affection of a brother and the tenderness of a woman. He was never for a moment cross or impatient and always ready to gratify Coley's slightest wish, and he grieved for him as for a brother. I shall always love the man for his devotion to Coley, who, on his death bed, told me he wanted Mr. Galloway to have his horse and other effects. He said his horse belonged to his brother, and Mr. Galloway would give it up if it was ever called for. He also has his pistol. There was nothing of service except to soldiers. I have his Testament and a few books. My Belle never let a morning pass without taking him a bouquet of flowers, which he always enjoyed.

Joe Carson came in the morning of his death. He grieved sorely to think he must give up forever his dearest friend. It made my heart ache to see his sorrow. Of the six who started out to mess together, only three remain, Mr. Galloway, Carson, and Clarkson. I sat with them around the dead and impressed on them the uncertainty of life. We dressed Coley in a nice suit of clothes furnished by a young friend of his, Tom Moore. When Coley was first brought in, Tom said to his mother, 'Do all you can for Coley Stone as he is my best friend.' Everything of the best kind was prepared for his burial. I wish it was in my power to describe the funeral, but my pen is inadequate. It took place just after night. The moon was full and shone most beautifully. The burial service by Mr. Markham was long and most appropriate. Nearly all of his company were present and a large number of ladies. A stranger would have thought from the feeling shown that we were each seeing a loved brother or son to his last resting place. All were in tears. That burial was one we will all remember. You have my deepest sympathy in this, your great sorrow.

How many sad hearts and broken households has this terrible war caused.

Most sincerely your friend,

Mary T. Bonham

... My heart bleeds for Mamma. Sorrow after sorrow rolls over her, almost more than she can bear, but she is a most brave woman and will not sink beneath the burden.

The moonlight falls clear and cold on the graves of three of those who made the mirth and happiness of our home only two short summers ago—three of the glad young voices are hushed, three of the bright young heads lie low. Now what remains of the high hopes, the stirring plans, and the great ambitions that burned in the hearts and filled the brain of these gallant boys—only a handful of dust. All have fallen in the dew and flower of their youth. Ashburn was the first to sink to his dreamless sleep. For two long years the grass has been springing fresh and green over his grave at Brokenburn. He died November 12, 1861, aged eighteen years and three months. Brother Walter was the next to obey the dread summons. He crossed the black waters of the River of Death February 15, 1863, aged eighteen years and two months, and now in the autumn of the same year Brother Coley has passed from Time to Eternity, his short life numbering twenty years and six months.

What charms can peace have for us when it does come bereft of our nearest and dearest?

*They grew in beauty side by side
They filled one home with glee,
Their graves are scattered far and wide
By mountain, grove, and sea.*

We can never return to the bright and happy home of three years ago. These three graves darken the threshold. Mamma was in Shreveport when we received the letter and did not get home for several days. She had heard all were well and came home cheerful and happy to be greeted by such news. It was an awful shock to her.

Brother Coley had such a brave and dauntless spirit in

that frail, sensitive body, a love for all that was pure and noble, and a scathing contempt for all that was low and mean. Joe Carson has just left after a short furlough home, and from him we learned all that we can know of Brother Coley. He had not grown to strong manhood, as we fondly imagined, but was still a beardless boy, tall and slender, the same fragile form and unbending energy and spirit that we knew at home. He had been offered a position as 2nd lieutenant in Bragg's army through Uncle Bo's influence. He had accepted it and expected to join his new company in a few days, when he received the injury that caused his death.

He was out scouting near Clinton with several others when something scared his horse, a powerful black of Dr. Buckner's. Brother Coley was sitting sideways on the horse, his leg thrown over the pommel. They had stopped to rest when the horse reared and Brother Coley's spur caught in the bit as he threw his leg over, and the horse fell backward crushing Brother Coley's shoulder and arm against a root—a most painful injury. He was a splendid rider, and to meet death that way. He had been in many skirmishes and engagements but never was wounded. In the desperate charge that the 28th Miss. made in the Franklin, Tenn., battle, he had his cartridge box shot off and fell from his horse but was unhurt. Once acting as regimental orderly he rode through a fire of shot and shell that none of the couriers would brave to carry orders to his squadron.

Brother Walter was only once under fire but acted with such coolness and courage that he was highly complimented by his officers. A small party were sleeping at a picket post on the bank of a little stream when they were surprised by the enemy, who opened artillery fire across the creek. The men rushed for their horses and galloped off, but Brother Walter after mounting rode to the banks of the stream and fired several shots at the gunners, saying afterwards, "Boys, I was just obliged to take a few shots at them." Well may we be proud of our brave boys, and we can never be grateful enough to the kind friends at Clinton who nursed Brother Coley so tenderly.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Dec. 12*: Not to us alone has God sent trouble and sorrow. Nearly every household mourns some loved one lost. Mamma and Mrs. Carson have gone out to see Mrs. Prentice. Her husband died last night leaving her a childless widow alone in a strange land. He had been ill for a week with pneumonia, and both Johnny and Jimmy have been sitting up with him. A letter from Amelia Scott yesterday tells of the death of her brother Charley on the bloody field of Chickamauga. Allen Bridges, a bright little boy not more than sixteen, Robert Norris, and Mr. Claud Briscoe all fell in the same engagement. Of that band of boys who used to assemble at our house to hunt, play, and amuse themselves, only Joe Carson and Ben Clarkson remain. Mr. Newton, who went with them so much and always on Saturday, fell months ago in some battle. Charley Scott was such a frank, warm-hearted young fellow, a heart overflowing with love and kindness, hospitable to the last degree. How his mother and sister will miss him. He was an idol with them both.

Mamma met several old friends in Shreveport and succeeded in getting Mr. Smith's discharge. She went to see Mary Gustine who is living very comfortably at Shreveport and is delighted with her husband. Her mother and Ella live with them. Eva Butts is married and living at Shreveport. Capt. Buckner, Mary's husband, is a Commissary with quarters at Shreveport. Eugenia Rossman is also married—to young Charley Allen, younger than herself by several years. We are duly thankful for that marriage. Mamma had a horror of her as a daughter-in-law, and I verily hated to think of her as a sister. My Brother stopped to see her on his last journey to Virginia and wrote to Mamma he was engaged to her, which news we received with a groan. But we do not think his heart will be irretrievably broken. Charley Allen is a wealthy boy, an only son, educated in Europe until nearly grown. I know his mother hates it.

Mamma met at the hotel an old friend, Mrs. Gibson, formerly Mrs. Lane, a very wealthy woman of Vicksburg. Aunt Laura waited on her at her first marriage. Her husband

is in jail to be tried for murder, and she has lost five children in the last two years. Mamma says she was never so sorry for anyone. She was looking dreadful and so desolate and unfriended. A letter from Sarah Wadley. They are back at home. They could not cross the river without great risk so returned to stand the worst the Yankees may do rather than attempt another runaway.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Dec. 13:* We missed Joe Carson after he left on December 9. We had to exert ourselves to keep from saddening his homecoming. He had great trouble in getting a furlough, and it was only through Ben Clarkson's kindness that he got it at last. Ben gave his furlough to Joe, the greatest kindness one soldier can show another. Brother Coley and Joe expected to come together, but it was not to be. Joe stayed a little over two weeks after a ride of ten days to get here. He is returning a shorter route. There is a strong probability of his being stopped in Shreveport and assigned to the army on this side as the authorities are allowing no soldiers to leave the Trans-Mississippi Department. Joe would be delighted as he is very anxious for a transfer to Louisiana, and if he reaches his command will try hard for a transfer. We hope, for his mother's sake as well as his own, that he may get it. We sent numbers of letters by him.

We heard of My Brother. He has been unable to go into service since Gettysburg. His wound is still unhealed and his arm stiff. He is staying in Lynchburg with Aunt Laura and Mrs. Buckner, Dr. Buckner's mother. Mamma is using every exertion to get a transfer or discharge for him. She has written to the Secretary of War on the subject. Brother Coley could have gotten a discharge at any time on account of ill-health, but he would not hear of it, and even when he knew that if he recovered his arm would be useless declared his intention of remaining in the army. A gallant spirit.

Uncle Bo is captain on some general's staff. He makes a dashing officer and must be a favorite with his mess. He has such a gay, joyous nature and is always in a good humor. Wish we knew the general's name.

It is sickening to hear Joe's account of the labor and hardships his regiment, the 28th Miss., has undergone in the last year. Sometimes they rode for twenty-two hours without leaving their saddles. Often they had insufficient food, no salt and at the best only beef and cornbread, no tents, sleeping out in the rain and snow, and frequent skirmishes and engagements. No wonder our poor boy sank under it. Joe has never missed a fight. The regiment from being one of the strongest in point of number is reduced to about 400 fit for duty.

Mamma, Mrs. Levy, and I attended Mr. Prentice's funeral this morning. Finding she would be entirely alone, we stayed until evening and Mamma remained all night. Such a desolate-looking graveyard. Such sombre trees and leaden skies and such inhospitable soil and clay. When I lie down to rest, may the heavy dews of Louisiana brighten the grass above my head.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Dec. 19*: Mamma, Mrs. Carson, and the little girls are off looking for a house to rent for Mrs. Savage. They are now on their way to Tyler and wish to have a house rented by their arrival. They expect to reach here by Christmas, and we will all be overjoyed to have them again as neighbors. We have not seen them for just a year. If Julia could come too, we would be pleased. She keeps us in kind remembrance. She has just sent me "the Rebel headress" and some visiting cards. Texas will not seem so desolate with old friends around us.

It has been intensely cold for some days, but the norther has at last blown itself away. We went out this morning to see Mrs. Prentice, fearing she has been lonely. We found Mrs. Hull and Mrs. Clark with her. Mrs. Hull is just back from Shreveport, going there to meet some St. Louis friends lately banished from the state. They say there is no prospect of peace. The North is more prosperous than ever before. Traveling through the states, one would hardly know there was a war going on. How different from our own suffering country. Mrs. Hull is a charming little woman. I would like to know her well. Mrs. Levy and Mrs. Wells beg us to

come out and stay some with them, but we have not the heart to visit now, only to see some refugee in trouble. Refugees must be good to each other.

The little girls go every morning to Mrs. Lawrence's to practice. They took dinner there and went to call in the afternoon on the Bocage children, a nice family just in from Arkansas.

How much boys add to the life of a house. Jimmy and Eddie have been on a visit of a few days at Mr. Fluellen's. They describe it as the nicest place they have seen in Texas. They like the Fluellen boys so much.

We are sewing and reading some dull, dry books. Mamma spent nearly a thousand dollars while in Shreveport buying clothes, five or six dresses. Everything is so enormously high. A plain delaine dress \$200 and a velvet mantle or poplin dress cannot be bought for less than \$1,500. She did not indulge in one of those.

No word from Joe yet.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Christmas Eve*: We have had quite a rush of company. Mrs. Templeton and Dr. Wylie spent a day and night with us. They had just been out to the river and to Vicksburg and could tell us much of interest. They came driving up in grand style, a beautiful carriage and horses. The family was quite in commotion. We could not guess what great dignitary was coming to visit us, when who should step out but Dr. Wylie, the same great, coarse, fast-talking man we were introduced to on the Macon, nowise improved by his Texas trip. It is a treat to hear him read. He rushes on like he was trying to catch a fast train, and one gets little idea of what he is reeling off. Mrs. Carson was in agony lest Eddie or I should disgrace ourselves by laughing outright. I shall put a stop to being teased about that horrid man. Not a boy shall open his lips on the subject. He assured us he would come again, but we will excuse him if he forgets.

Two of Gen. Roane's ⁹¹ staff honored us with a call that morning, Capt. Smith (singular name) and Lt. Somerville,

⁹¹ Brigadier General J. Selden Roane, former governor of Arkansas.—Thomas, *Arkansas in War and Reconstruction*, 139, 156, and 165.

both quite pleasant. Capt. Smith is handsome with bold black eyes and a fast "about town" manner. Lt. Somerville has a boyish face and a horror of being considered young. He announces with a manly air that he is twenty-one—but he looks seventeen.

Mr. Levy and Mr. Michele spent the afternoon and took tea. Mr. Michele, a Creole from New Orleans and with all their mannerisms, is stationed here in some government post. He will prove an agreeable addition to our society. He escaped from New Orleans five days after his marriage, leaving his wife there. Capt. King, our only other acquaintance, holds out to the promise of a visit, a pleasure, in the near future.

A letter from Amelia Scott. They are still uncertain of Charley's fate. What a trying time of suspense. She begs me to come and stay some with them but I cannot visit now. My heart is too heavy. Johnny and Jimmy Carson have gone to Mr. Fluellen's to spend Christmas. We are glad for the little fellows to have a pleasant Christmas. It is very dull here as we are making no preparations for the day, which was formerly a season of such merriment and rejoicing.

*Tears, idle tears, Tears from the depth of some distant
time,*

Rise in the heart and gather in the eyes,

In gazing o'er the dreary winter fields

*And thinking of the days that are no more.*⁹²

Mr. Cleghorn of rose and river fame spent Sunday with us. The same detestable man as of yore. Mamma and Mrs. Carson still hunting a house. I, dressed in my best, black dress and yellow ribbons, have nothing better to do this morning than scribble.

⁹² A paraphrase of lines from Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Princess":

Tears, idle tears . . .

Tears from the depth of some divine despair

Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,

In looking on the happy autumn fields,

And thinking of the days that are no more.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Christmas Night*: The day has passed most quietly, not a cake, not a visitor. We did have an eggnog but only the servants enjoyed it. Made of mean whiskey, it smacked of Texas. We missed our regular Christmas visitor, Mr. Valentine. He has been with us for the last three years. I wonder where he is now. Only one present on the place, a fine turkey from Mrs. Lawrence. Last Christmas morning when dear little Beverly raised up in bed, and looking at her stockings saw only some homemade toys, bedstead and chairs made of white pine by the plantation carpenter, hid her head, sobbing that she "would not have the ugly common fings." Aunt Laura told her how bad that was and that poor Santa Claus had done his best but he could not get through the Yankee lines. Presently the little, flushed face was raised and an apologetic little voice faltered out, "Table, I begs your pardon. Bedstead, I begs your pardon. I will keep you and play with you. You is nice." What a dear little heart she is.

Two letters for me and four for Mrs. Carson today. Hers were from her brother in the North and Mrs. Newman. They had just heard of Dr. Carson's death and wrote letters of condolence begging her to come North. "Uncle Ed" would perhaps come down for her. So we may have a chance to see far-famed Uncle Ed at last. We have heard much of him, but living in New York, he has seemed rather a mythical personage until now. Mrs. Newman rather rejoices in being in the Yankee lines and says she will remain at home. It is not a specially pleasant letter. She sends love to us all. Anna writes they have advanced as far as Shreveport. No house to be had as yet. A letter from Joe at Monroe. The river is rising so rapidly, we fear he will find great difficulty in getting across.

A cold, moonshiny night, a warm room, and Mamma dozing at ease in our only rocking chair before a bright fire. The chair has accompanied us in all our journeyings since leaving Monroe and, though not a thing of beauty, it is a joy forever and seldom without an occupant. Sad to say, it is showing signs of wear, but it has acted the part of comforter in our weary pilgrimage.

The all prevailing topic at present is the dire disease that afflicts the quartette of boys. It will be long before they hear the last of the disease and their dire crime in concealing it from their mothers. Fortunately for us all, poor little Eddie was the first to suffer and gave it to all the other boys. This is a rich field for Mrs. Carson to exhibit all her crochets, and she allows no opportunity to pass. She is a rather difficult person to live with, so many fads and fancies and so bent on carrying them through. The boys are not enjoying their lives at present. The greatest comfort and amusement they find is in trying to tease me about Dr. Wylie, an inexhaustible fund for Johnny and Eddie.

Mrs. Lawrence has been kind about lending us her books, but we have about finished her library. Have read history until I feel as dry as those old times. Have nearly memorized Tennyson and read and reread our favorite plays in Shakespeare. Fortunately he never grows old. We hope Mr. McGee will be able to get *Harper's* to us. We wrote to him for it. That would keep us stirred up for awhile at least. The literature of the North is to us what the "flesh pots of Egypt" were to the wandering Israelites—we long for it.

Never a letter but brings news of death. Mr. Catlin is gone. And when we saw him last spring, what a picture of vigorous health he was. I wish we could hear from Lt. Valentine. Our old neighborhood is scattered to the four winds.

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1864

"Disaster and despair"

[Tyler, Tex.] *Jan. 4:* We were glad to see the Old Year go. It had been a year of trial to us, and we rejoiced when we caught the last glimpse of the sail bearing him on to the dim Ocean of Eternity. The New Year came wailing in, borne on the wings of a freezing norther. God grant it may bring peace to our warworn land and those we love home again.

Mrs. Savage and her cortege, with Dr. Meagher in the train, arrived Tuesday and are busy settling in their new quarters. The little girls have been staying in here with us until today. We found five in the room with insufficient bed-clothes rather too much for comfort in this freezing weather. I very foolishly allowed myself to be persuaded to spend the first night out in camp with them, and I have not recovered from it yet. I feel like blushing every time I think of it as we all practically slept together with only a curtain separating the tent into two rooms and the mattresses touching each other. I never felt so out of place. Anna is the same as ever, but Emily Norris has outgrown the name of little girl. She has developed very rapidly and promises to be a noted flirt. She already has her "trot lines" out for all these boys. Think Jimmy Stone and Eddie will fall easy victims, but I doubt her ability to land such shy, wild specimens as Johnny and Jimmy Carson.

We are so glad to have Johnny and Jimmy start to school today. It worried us all the time seeing Jimmy losing his last year at home learning nothing. We did not mind so much about Johnny's idleness. He is well advanced and the

brightest child I ever saw. He takes the lead. Jimmy Carson and Eddie will follow him anywhere and applaud all he says or does.

Jimmy Carson has been away for a week on business connected with Anderson's killing that Negro, a dreadful affair, and Mrs. Carson has fretted over his absence as she alone can fret. It is a terrible spell of weather to be traveling. The snow is several inches deep and frozen hard with the keenest wind howling around the house.

Capt. King, the exquisite, has paid us several visits and beaten me a game of chess by my connivance. He came by to tell us good-bye Tuesday on his way to Shreveport and Camden. Sent letters by him and one of introduction to Julia and Carrie Lowry.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Jan. 7*: All the unimportant days so far fall on Friday, Christmas, New Year's, and my twenty-third birthday, the day of ill omen, all on luckless Friday. Let us see what reputation we can give it on the last of the year, when we can scan the record.

In the last twelve months trouble and distress have been our portion. "We have swallowed our tears like water" and have sunk beneath the chastisement of Our Lord. "His hands hath been heavy upon us," yet "He hath not utterly forsaken us," and we can thank Him for many blessings left.

A monotonous week to all closely housed by the extreme cold. Mamma and Mrs. Carson both depressed. Jimmy more than usually solemn. Eddie silent and subdued. The little girls tired of their usual pursuits, even cats and dolls have lost their charm. Even Johnny, the merriest and most mirth-loving of boys, has quieted down and is busy with his books and studies. He misses his great chum, Jimmy Carson, who is still away much to his mother's annoyance.

No news from My Brother for so many months. When will he come? We are weary watching for the sight of his face and the sound of his voice. Gen. Morgan's daring escape is one piece of good news.¹

¹ On November 27, 1863, General John Hunt Morgan, the famous cavalry leader, escaped from prison in Columbus, Ohio.—C. F. Holland, *Morgan and His Raiders* (New York, 1942), 268-87.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Jan. 13*: Good news from My Dearest Brother today. He is almost well and has rejoined his regiment. We heard through a letter from Capt. Manlove December 8. Flora Manlove, Tom's wife, sent a nice little note to me in the letter. How sweet of her to write. We have only a slight acquaintance, but she knows My Brother well and saw him quite recently in Virginia. Capt. Manlove is so kind. He writes Mamma by every opportunity. A letter from My Brother, written in March. Other letters for Mrs. Carson urging her to come North. Different Yankees at Monroe and Vicksburg will send her on, but she will not hear of it. It is a good thing. She is wise enough to see that such schemes for abandoning all that they have are foolish in the extreme.

Dr. Wylie is spending the evening and night. What a sordid soul that man has. Did he ever perform a generous action in his life of forty years?

Mrs. Lawrence and Mrs. Baxter were here this morning, and I am to dine with them tomorrow. I dread it, as I am to go alone. The children are all going to school, and Sister and Katie are charmed. The boys are not molested at this school.

Mamma sent a letter to Mr. Smith yesterday, and if he can get what she writes for we shall feel quite independent. The first desideratum is a carriage.

[Tyler, Tex.] *March 8*: I am quite alone tonight, not even a book for company. Mamma is in Shreveport trying to get a transfer for My Brother. The boys are in their room studying, and Sister, after suffering agony for the last twenty-four hours, has at last fallen asleep. The Negroes have left the yard. Even the dogs have forgotten to bark and are dozing on the gallery. The only sounds to break the stillness are the constant chirps of the crickets, the croaking of the rain crows heard afar off, and the mournful whistle of some Texas night-bird borne up from the thickety banks of the little stream "that flows through the meadow" across the road just at the foot of the hill. The wild March wind has subsided to a gentle zephyr, rustling the dry leaves still clinging

to the stunted oaks till now when the new shoots are budding out to push them off.

But to descend to dry facts. Our greatest event has been the breaking up of the pleasant household of the last four months. We were all getting on quite pleasantly and all seemed satisfied and happier than ever before in Texas. None of us thought of change, when suddenly one frosty morning came the announcement from Mrs. Carson that she knew of a house to be rented and she would move to it. She thought the households would be better apart. Of course there was nothing to be said, and Mamma at once assented, only offering to take the other house and let Mrs. Carson remain here. But she preferred the new domicile, and so, presto-change, before we hardly realized it they were packed up and away a mile across the hill.

There had not been the shadow of disagreement, and we thought Mrs. Carson perfectly satisfied. We never have known why she left in such a hurry. All the children but Jimmy Stone were disgusted at the change. They were so enjoying themselves together. Mrs. Carson has kept most closely at home rarely calling on either Mamma or Mrs. Savage and she will seldom allow the boys or Katie to come. Such a change from her former habit of going out once or twice every day and doing nothing but talk between times. It seems very odd. She says she is entirely taken up with her housekeeping and sewing, two things she was never known to do in the past. Just one of her eccentric moods that there is no use worrying about. Eddie, according to his usual want, entered a most energetic protest to the move which resulted, as his protests always do, in a long lecture prefaced by the usual "My Darling, come in here." Mrs. Carson's children must hate the word "darling." Johnny was wretched for awhile, he missed the boys so and Eddie was inconsolable for a week. But they have brightened up now, and once or twice every day the boys come galloping up, emerging from the woods with a shrill whistle, and nearly always with a little bunch of wildwood flowers for me. So as they are at school, I think Mamma is rather relieved. Mrs. Carson often

bored Mamma by insisting on talking to her hours at the time. I could not have stood it as Mamma did.

We have refugee visitors but the natives, with the exception of Dr. Lawrence's family, still hold aloof. Capt. King with his dark, sleepy eyes and grand air is a frequent visitor. We have been trying to get a backgammon board and chessmen to amuse him and ourselves but so far without success. The other afternoon we were enjoying our ease, Mamma lolling back in one chair her feet on another, Sister romping over the bed, and I reclining on several pillows, when we heard a knock at the door. Thinking it one of the servants, we called out, "Come in." Who should stalk in with his most dignified air, flashing in crimson and gold, but Capt. King, calling to say good-bye, having been ordered off. Fortunately for us, he is too near-sighted to notice much, and so the disorder of the room escaped him.

Mrs. Savage's family we see constantly.

[Tyler, Tex.] *March 20*: I spent last week in the country, just the wildest most remote section of civilization, with the Goddards, who were complete strangers until then. They are from Arkansas and were recommended to us by Julia some time ago. We had seen some nice-looking strangers at church in the morning. In the afternoon in the midst of our animated chat with Cpts. Smithy and Empy, callers came. The young ladies were announced and introduced themselves. They were so cordial and said they had come the twenty miles to meet us and to carry me home with them and were so insistent that I could hardly refuse, particularly as Mamma urged me to go. So I accompanied them next morning just twenty miles from anywhere. Mr. Goddard has a hat factory established there, and we spent the time as pleasantly as one could in a rough new house perched on a white sandbank in the midst of a limitless pine forest with rather silent strangers. No amusements except riding horseback on rough horses over roads of deep white sand studded with stumps. Only the necessities, none of the luxuries of life. On the seventh day I was only too glad to come home, though I had to do what none of us had ever done before—

drive home in a buggy driven by an old, old Negro man. Mr. Goddard had promised to bring me home at any time. He would not hear of Mamma's sending for me, and so I was helpless to get away. I shall not forgive any of them for sending me back in that style, and I never want to see any of them again. I was scared all day long, coming so slowly through those lonely woods, few houses on the way. The old driver was as respectful as possible, but the idea of the trip was perfectly repugnant. Mamma did not like it one bit more than I.

Mamma returned Saturday. She succeeded in her mission and My Brother will be transferred to this department if he can get across the river, but that is very doubtful.² She saw them all at Mary Gustine's and Missie Morris, who is on a visit there. She regretted not taking me with her to enjoy seeing all of them. Missie wrote me. She says it is her second letter, and I was thinking I had offended her.

Mamma heard that Kate Nailor is dead, leaving a little child. My darling girl, I can never love any other friend as I have loved her. She was all that was good and pure and most beautiful, and hers was a happy, lovely life but for My Brother whose hand alone had given her myrrh to drink. She was the petted darling of her entire household—never refused any wish that could be gratified.

[Tyler, Tex.] *March 22*: Letters from Annie and Joe. Annie writes an affectionate, amusing letter and is a good correspondent. Joe is at Vienna [La.] nursing Willy Carson, who is not well enough to be moved. That wound in his arm was more serious than they thought. Joe sent us two late magazines, *Frank Leslie's*³ and *Harper's*. They ignore the war, but are great on the fashions which seem to be about the same as three years ago. The hoops are enormous but the bonnets not so towering, false hair *ad libitum*. The stories are trashy.

Capt. King is still a visitor. We are quite comfortable at

² The Mississippi had been in the hands of Federal forces since the fall of Vicksburg in July, 1863.

³ *Frank Leslie's Lady's Magazine*, established in New York in 1857.

home now. We hope not to move again until we strike the homeward trail. I dread Kate and Uncle Johnny's coming to live with us, but it seems not to be helped. Uncle Johnny could not get on in Austin.

[Tyler, Tex.] *April 15*: Jimmy, Sister, and I are keeping house in lonely state. Mamma and Johnny are on a visit to the prairie. We are looking for Mrs. Payne and Julia any time. Their baggage and Negroes have already arrived. They left Camden for fear of the Yankees who were not far distant. We will be delighted to have them near us, but I fear Julia will not be the same dear girl now that she has relinquished her freedom and is engaged to be married. Capt. Street from Arkansas is the fortunate man. He has certainly drawn a prize. Julia will make a model wife. I fancy the wedding will be soon. Julia will find it dull here after her bellehood at Camden, where Gen. Price has had his headquarters and the social life has been very gay.

People do not mourn their dead as they used to. Everyone seems to live only in the present—just from day to day—otherwise I fancy many would go crazy.

Carrie Lowry was married last month to Col. Polk of Arkansas. Her family are all pleased at the match. It was a grand wedding, and Julia was first bridesmaid.

A letter from Aunt Sarah to Mamma enclosing one from My Brother. He was on the Rapidan when he wrote, on picket duty but was soon after detailed as brigade inspector and ordered to headquarters at Orange County Court House. He expected a nice time there, a tent, and little to do. He has lost hope of a transfer. They will not even give him a furlough. We still have strong hopes of his transfer through Gen. Kirby Smith's application. As Mamma was away, I opened the letter with a sinking heart, sure that it contained bad news.

Joe is with the army at Campti [La.].⁴

The papers are filled with news of our great victory at

⁴ About sixty miles southeast of Shreveport.

Mansfield, La., where the Yankees were so confident of success.⁵ They had boasted that in two weeks the last armed rebel would be driven from Louisiana, Shreveport would be taken without a struggle, and then they would sweep over Texas, a besom of destruction. Then they would leisurely march back, after establishing freedom, law, and order in this benighted country, to the river, going in time to join Grant in his "On to Richmond." But they find themselves mistaken. We did the gobbling act. We have taken over 5,000 soldiers and many stores. It is our first great success on this side of the river, and the effect will be magical, inspiring both citizens and soldiers. Our loss was heavy, especially in officers, Gens. Green and Mouton both killed⁶ and Gen. Polignac dangerously wounded.⁷ Our gallant Southern soldiers—who can praise them enough? as much as they deserve?

We will never laugh at our soldiers on this side of the

⁵ In 1863, General Banks with a large force ascended Red River to capture Shreveport, headquarters of the Trans-Mississippi Department, and Marshall, Tex., important supply and administrative center. The force reached Natchitoches, dangerously near Shreveport, on April 3. General Taylor's Confederate forces surprised Banks near Mansfield, La., about forty miles south of Shreveport, and defeated him in the Battle of Mansfield, April 8. The Battle of Pleasant Hill the next day was hardly as successful for the Confederates, but the Federals were forced to retreat and eventually to give up the campaign altogether.—*Battles and Leaders*, IV, 345-57; Blessington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 182-200.

⁶ General Alfred Mouton, a Louisianian, was in command of a brigade of Texans and Louisianians at the Battle of Mansfield, where he was killed April 8. General Tom Green, commander of a brigade of Texas cavalry, was killed at Blair's Landing, La., April 12.—*Battles and Leaders*, IV, 357; Blessington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 184-85.

⁷ One of the most colorful officers in the Confederate Army was Prince Camille de Polignac, a Frenchman who came to America early in the war and offered his services to the Confederacy. He soon rose to the rank of major general. He was in France on a political mission for Governor Allen of Louisiana when the war ended and did not return. In 1918 his daughter, the Marquise de Courtivron, visited the Mansfield battlefield, and when she returned to France she organized the Paris Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. On the anniversary of the battle in 1925, a monument, provided by the Paris Chapter, was unveiled at Mansfield by Polignac's son in the presence of the general's widow.—Thomas, *Arkansas in War and Reconstruction*, 261.

Mississippi again.⁸ Gen. Green was about the most popular officer in this department. Three thousand prisoners will arrive here tonight to be guarded with their companions in misery at the conscript camp.

Capt. King has married recently a pretty little Creole refugee from New Orleans. It was a short acquaintance. We have exchanged calls and find her very pleasant, but I doubt she will have a happy life. We find Capt. King is quite a drinker. Dr. McGregor from Arkansas in one of the Departments here is our most frequent visitor. Dr. Johnson, of laboratory fame,⁹ has presented us with such a nice chess-board and backgammon box made by himself, and I have vanquished him in a game of chess much to my delight and his chagrin. It was his first game lost to a lady he says. He is something like Dr. Buckner in manner, and about his age. Dr. McGregor is a jolly, good-natured bachelor—not overly refined. He is something like our New Orleans friend, Mr. McGregor. The same clan, I suppose.

Willy Carson is at home. He has not grown any but looks well. His arm will not be well for a month yet. He is awfully shy and ill at ease. As I succeeded in melting Jimmy Carson's reserve, I do not despair of Willy. I am about the only young lady in the world that Jimmy is not afraid of. We are great chums. Mrs. Carson has resumed her old habit and is out in her carriage every day. She has dropped Mrs. Levy and is devoting her time to Mrs. Lawrence. She is of a strange nature. Mrs. Levy is living at the laboratory. Dr. Johnson is at the head of it, making medicines and whiskey for the Government. Jimmy and I spent a delightful day with Mrs. Levy. She is so cordial.

Mrs. Judge N. Richardson has paid her friends the long expected visit. She divided her time among her friends here, but Mrs. Carson told her that she could only ask her to call as her house was too small to entertain. She has four rooms

⁸ Before the Battle of Mansfield, there had been a great deal of criticism of Trans-Mississippi Department troops.

⁹ The Trans-Mississippi Medical Department was located about three miles east of Tyler. A laboratory there made medicines for the Confederacy.—Woldert, *A History of Tyler*, 41.

but will not ask anyone to take a meal or sleep. Mrs. Richardson and I have a plan for a trip to San Antonio, which will be splendid if we can only carry it out. She has three sisters-in-law living there. The Richardsons are at Rusk.¹⁰ They left in time to save everything and they had lots.

We see Mrs. Savage's family nearly every day. Jimmy and Eddie seem to have recovered from their desperate love affair with Emily.

We have had several trashy novels, the best, *The Dead Secret*.¹¹ The papers are most interesting and a great resource, particularly the Houston papers.

[Tyler, Tex.] *May 5*: What glorious news we have tonight and have been having for a month! First, Banks with his insolent boasts and vainglorious columns, waving banners and beating drums to the easy conquest of Texas, is met at glorious Mansfield and Pleasant Hill [La.] by our brave soldiers and meets only defeat and disgrace. He has been flying ever since with our victorious troops, who in hot pursuit press on, striking blow after blow on his disorganized forces and capturing men, wagons, and stores left behind in the hasty retreat. He is in Alexandria now, in the shadow of his gunboats for a little breathing space. Many of his invincible fleet have been destroyed.¹² Then in Arkansas we have had a succession of victories, and now Gen. Steele is trying to cut his way through the fiery circle of rebels who surround him. And what quantities of stores of all kinds we have captured!¹³ Banks and Steele are our commissary and quartermaster now. All ours can go to fighting. The battle

¹⁰ The county seat of Cherokee County, organized in 1846.

¹¹ A novel by William Wilkie Collins, published in 1857.

¹² The Federal fleet comprised thirteen iron-clads, seven light-draught gunboats, and supply ships. Low water in Red River held up the ships but most of them escaped. The Federals lost one iron-clad, two pump-boats, and two gunboats.—*Battles and Leaders*, IV, 362, 366.

¹³ After defeating the Federals at Mansfield, General Smith sent troops into Arkansas to attack General Steele, who was on his way to Shreveport to assist Banks in the capture of that city. Steele was defeated and forced to retire.—Thomas, *Arkansas in War and Reconstruction*, 264–68.

of Mansfield was fought on the day appointed for National fasting and prayer.¹⁴

What a cry of gratitude has gone up to God for our victories. This whole country is in a state of delighted surprise, and as telegram after telegram comes announcing some new success, we can hardly believe our good fortune. Every face is bright with the good tidings. How splendidly our men have fought and how many gallant spirits have fallen. Four generals have fallen in the last month and hosts of lesser officers, greater in proportion than the loss of privates. God bless them all. They are an army of heroes. And from the other side of the river, victory answers to victory. Gen. Forrest is doing noble work in Tennessee and Kentucky. We hear tonight he has recaptured Memphis. Ross is clearing the Yazoo Valley, killing and capturing thousands.¹⁵ Everywhere Victory is perching on our banners and Peace, an honorable Peace, must be near.

We are still looking for My Brother. Hear he has a sixty-day furlough. Uncle Bo's wound is not well enough for him to leave the hospital. Julia and Mrs. Payne came and are staying at Mrs. Savage's. They remained with us until Mamma got home. Julia is with us. Generally, she is more quiet than of old. She is anxious about her lover who is with the army opposing Gen. Steele, but as he is a quartermaster he should be quite safe. But Julia cannot see it in that light and thinks him in as much danger as a colonel leading his regiment. Julia would be shocked if she knew I considered him in a bomb-proof position. They think of going to Jefferson to live. Then we shall not see Julia married. She is very busy altering and making dresses, Mamma being chief councillor and cutter. Every day or so Julia comes with something to be cut or remodeled, and we have grand consultations on the fashions, which is an exemplification of the blind

¹⁴ April 8, 1864, had been set aside as a day of fasting and prayer for the Confederacy.

¹⁵ In March and April, 1864, General N. B. Forrest advanced from Mississippi through western Tennessee to Paducah, Ky. On his return he captured Fort Pillow.—*Battles and Leaders*, IV, 415. General L. S. Ross, commanding a cavalry brigade, was conducting raids in Mississippi.—*Official Records*, Ser. I, XXXII, Pt. 1,653.

leading the blind, as we are all in a state of dense ignorance. I have taken up the trade of glovemaking from buckskins. Have made a pair for Jimmy and have several others on hand. I make them with large gauntlets and embroidered backs for my favorites.

Since the passing of the seventeen-year act,¹⁶ Jimmy has been most eager to join the army, and we were afraid at one time he would have to go at once. Mamma bought him a horse, which we named Prosperity in contradistinction to his horse Calamity, and we are busy getting Jimmy ready with heavy hearts. We hate so to see him go. We hear now that the enrollment is postponed, a great relief to us all except Jimmy, who insists on going anyway. But surely we can keep him a while longer. Mrs. Carson has gone to Shreveport to try to get Jimmy Carson's release from Gen. Smith. Jimmy Carson, though wild to join the army, has behaved very well, perfectly obedient, and continues his studies like a dear good boy as he is. He and Eddie are about living with us now that their mother is away. They keep us supplied with wild flowers. Jimmy has his father's love for them. I fear Jimmy and I are in for a scolding from Mrs. Carson. We started in her buggy to see the May Festival, and at the top of the first hill the wheel smashed all to pieces. I feel Mrs. Carson will visit it on us, but we were not to be balked of our trip. Jimmy rushed off home for Joe's horse, Gold Dust, and we were soon mounted and on our way. We were too late for the coronation but had several pleasant hours talking nonsense to our gentlemen acquaintances and were regaled on some real loaf sugar cake. Jimmy Carson, Gold Dust, and I are having some lovely rides these soft May days. The wild flowers are in profusion on every hillside and lovely blue wild violets in the hollows.

[Tyler, Tex.] *May 7*: Uncle Johnny and family are living with us now. They are all in bad health, but Tyler will build them up. We have not heard from Other Pa for an age. He remained in Arkansas.

¹⁶ In February, 1864, the Conscription Act of 1862 was amended to include men between the ages of seventeen and fifty.

Jimmy and Eddie have just left. Both the Jimmies are in a high state of indignation and contempt at an order signed by Gen. Kirby Smith just received from Shreveport detailing them as *overseers*. So Mrs. Carson was successful and sent it on. The boys consider it a perfect outrage and say they will not submit to such a thing.

Jimmy and I went out to see Mrs. Levy and found them most sanguine as to the speedy close of the war. They think we will be traveling homeward by fall, but I think not before next spring. Jimmy gathered a bunch of lovely fragrant sweet Williams and dashed into town for the mail, only to find the post office closed. On our return home in a canter, Prosperity's most pleasant gait, I found Mamma entertaining Mrs. Payne, Julia, Emily, and Dr. Johnson.

We have company nearly all the time now. It makes it seem something like the old home days, a crowded house. Mrs. Gen. Roane and Capts. Smith and Empey were out recently. She is very pleasant, though Julia has taken a prejudice against her. Julia has liked only one person she has met—Capt. Empey. He is a great flatterer with a stock of ready-made compliments that he weighs out to every young lady as a grocer weighs out sugar. He is persuaded that he is irresistible. Capt. Smith has long hair and is a rollicking, jolly young fellow overflowing with fun.

Dr. McGregor says there is much sickness in town, and he is too busy for much calling. Jimmy Carson and I rode out beyond the Yankee camp yesterday. The blue-coated prisoners are swarming within the stockade, several thousand of them, and those captured in Arkansas are expected every day. I rode Gold Dust. He is so well-gaited. Joe begs me to keep him and to ride him to death if I wish, but to let no one else ride him.

[Tyler, Tex.] *May 18*: There was a terrible tragedy enacted here today. Three men, noted Jayhawkers, were taken out of jail and just out of town were hanged by mob law. It is horrible and makes one shudder to think of it, though it is said they richly deserved their fate. The leader of the gang was the sheriff of the county, and the two who suffered

with him were his sons-in-law. They were not from this county.

Three Yankees died today at the hospital, which is not strange as they are so dreadfully crowded and have the roughest fare. But we cannot help them. They should have stayed in their own bountiful country instead of coming down here to kill and destroy. Our good news continues. Steele and Banks are still falling back. A great battle is rumored in Virginia, Grant's first fight in his "On to Richmond." He is opposed by the Invincible Lee, and so we are satisfied we won the victory. But it makes us anxious for My Brother.

Hutch Bowman was here for two or three days and has gone on to his command. He and Joe are together. Hutch is dreadfully tanned, looks a regular Texan, a slow, good boy but a great romp. We see Mrs. Savage, Julia, and Mrs. Carson every day. Julia is crazy to get back to Camden. As we prophesied, she does not like it here. But I would let the Major come for me. I would not go to him even in times of war.

For the last few days no stages have come in, and how we do miss the mails, one of Tyler's chief attractions.¹⁷ Jimmy Stone has stopped going to school and studies English at home. He is eager to get off to the army. Uncle Johnny, Kate, and the baby are all improving and look less like shadows and more like human beings.

[Tyler, Tex.] *May 25*: We have bidden Julia and Mrs. Payne farewell this evening. "It may be for years and it may be forever," as they return to Camden—the entire cortege, Negroes and all. Maj. Street sent an ambulance for them and they secured a wagon here. Julia is perfectly delighted to go back, but Mrs. Payne is not so pleased. I surely would let that strong, healthy Major come for me. I would not travel 200 miles over rough jolting roads to meet him. But then I am not in love with him and she is. That makes a vast difference, I suppose. I spent the night with her, and

¹⁷ The Trans-Mississippi Postal Department was located at Marshall, about fifty miles from Tyler.

we sat up nearly all night having our last confidential chat together.

Thursday Julia and I, dressed in our best fancy yellow organdies, went calling with Mamma. Found nearly everyone out. Julia and I deserted Mamma and perambulated around town looking for flowers, stealing them through the palings and decorating our heads with them. At Mrs. Wells', we were regaled on huge slices of poundcake and fine music. Jimmy Stone and I rode out to see Mrs. Prentice. She likes Jimmy very much and says he reminds her so of her young son Horace, who died at about his age. The ride was delightful through the woods, sweet with the wild grape fragrance.

Jimmy Stone has gone to the prairie [Lamar County] and Johnny is lost without him. Our usual succession of visitors—boys, officers, doctors, and ladies.

[Tyler, Tex.] *May 29*: The news this morning is enough to make one hurrah. Grant is repulsed with a loss of 45,000 and Johnston is victorious at Dalton with 10,000 prisoners captured.¹⁸ Providence is smiling on our arms this year. Not a defeat. Peace, glorious Peace, will gladden our hearts before the spring flowers bloom again.

It is the fairest of May days and Mamma has gone to church. I stayed with Johnny, who is feeling unwell and is in bed. Mamma will find it unpleasantly warm walking that mile from church. Oh, for a carriage! My ambition reaches out only for a carriage and a riding horse for Johnny, then I shall be satisfied—for a little while. I doubt that I was ever intended for a poor girl. Deprivations go hard with me. Mamma has more strength of mind than to worry about it.

A wagon just arrived from the prairie loaded with eatables and some of the "wherewithal." Not a cent of money in the house for a week and only hard fare. As the wagon has come, Jimmy's trip was useless. All the Negroes are well and affairs are flourishing in that land of desolation. The last few days have been as dismal as a rainy Sunday. We miss Julia. No letters, no visitors, and even the boys have half-way deserted

¹⁸ Dalton, Ga., in the campaign against Atlanta. The reports of these successes were highly exaggerated.

us. They are much at the hospital with Lt. Story. The refugee children have all stopped school except Sister—Emily and Annie because Mrs. Savage is so lonely and Katie Carson is sick. Mrs. Savage grows ruder every day. She is so often rough and unkind in her speech that the boys all stand in terror of her tongue and will hardly venture to go there.

[Tyler, Tex.] *May 30*: Our first busy day this spring, sewing on the cloth from the prairie. We are at last using homespun. Hemmed a dozen towels today, looking much like the dish towels of old. Little Sister is to have an outfit from the same piece, but she quite glories in the idea of wearing homespun and coming out a regular Texan. The house servants are charmed to see the cloth. They have been fit suspects for the ragman for weeks. Mamma is readying up Charles, who has been a regular ragamuffin. We are sorry Adeline, the seamstress, selected this as a fit time to run away. It keeps our hands full. Mamma sent Felix back to Mr. Smith and has Thomas in his place. We think he will be an improvement. Johnny is up today. Willy spent the day with him, and they had great romps until the other boys came up from school and carried him off. Pompey, Joe's boy, is home on furlough. The command has been in several skirmishes on Red River but are now at Trenton [La.].

[Tyler, Tex.] *May 31*: The rain upset numerous plans for the day, but Capt. Buck came in a pelting shower. He is pleasant and evidently counts himself a widower, but he is not. Kate and Sister came running in out of the rain, wild and eager, bursting in like a tornado. What inseparable friends they are. Katie still patters around home barefooted, much to Eddie's disgust.¹⁹ Mrs. Carson came for Katie and

¹⁹ Barefoot little Katie grew up to become a lady. She married Clifton Rodes Breckinridge, son of John Cabell Breckinridge, Vice-President of the United States during Buchanan's administration, at Memphis, November 21, 1876. Clifton Breckinridge entered the military service of the Confederacy at fifteen, and after the war was a planter in Arkansas. He was elected to the U. S. Congress in 1882 and 1884 and in 1894 was made Minister to Russia, which position he held until 1897.—*Biographical Directory of the American Congress*.

went home with fever, as Johnny told us, after galloping over there just in time for supper to see Willy, who is suffering with his arm.

A long letter just received from Mr. Valentine in answer to mine of February. He writes so affectionately that I know he has a strong attachment for all of us. They slandered him who said he had no heart. He is a man of warm feeling. I was aghast to hear that he at once dispatched my letter to Lt. Valentine after reading it to the assembled household. I do not fancy young Mark reading and criticizing my letter to his comrades around the campfire. I shall write the old gentleman that my letters are entirely for his home consumption.

I hear Emily's French every morning. She has been studying it for two years, but one would think she had but just commenced.

Mrs. Carson spent several hours but would not stay to dinner. The two families would certainly miss each other were they separated.

Pompey and Dan should certainly have their pictures taken. They are the most independent and consequential personages in Tyler. They speak very learnedly of their furloughs and have wordy debates on the subject of rank. Pompey maintains that he and Marse Joe outrank Dan and Marse Willy by reason of their longer service and doing more duty in the field, a fact that Dan is loth to admit. Pompey is quite contemptuous in speaking of Marse Willy and Dan as holiday soldiers and speaks with great respect of the pleasures of a campaign across the river where they have "so much more fun fighting and shooting."

Owe a number of calls but cannot pay them yet as "our crop" and garden are in the grass.

[Tyler, Tex.] *June 1*: Have been busy tonight packing my clothes for an early start in the morning. Mrs. Prentice, Emily, and I are going to see Mrs. Richardson at Rusk. Mrs. Prentice goes on business, we on pleasure. Jimmy Stone would go with us, but Emily makes such a goose of herself about him that he will not go.

Adeline got back today from her "rustication" so we turn the sewing over to her. Johnny's occupation today is paying up debts. Never were debtors more eager to pay or creditors so loth to receive. All want to wait for the new issue.²⁰ Made Lela Lawrence a pretty fan today, but Jimmy has not the handle ready yet. Jimmy Carson and I have been having some charming rides over the steep hills and through the deep valleys, all fragrant with the breath of flowers.

[Tyler, Tex.] *June 6*: Nearly a week of rain and I am *ennuyée* to death. No visitors, no books, no letters, *no anything*. We returned on Sunday much to Emily and my dissatisfaction, though Mrs. Richardson was not at home and Mrs. Prentice was quite contrary. We found Mrs. Prentice just a bundle of crochets. She insisted on our walking up and down nearly every hill on the road, and it is a succession of long, rocky, red hills. When we reached Judge Richardson's late that afternoon, Emily and I were completely broken down, but a nice supper and comfortable bed set us up again. Coming back, we asserted our reserved rights and walked up half the hills. Emily and I spent Saturday alone at Judge Richardson's and had a lovely time. The Judge and Mrs. Prentice went off on business, and Emily and I took possession of comfortable rocking chairs on a low shady gallery with plenty of books and a basket of green apples. Just as we were tiring of these luxuries, a gentleman, a refugee as we discovered, came to call on the Judge and made himself very entertaining for the rest of the morning. We compared notes on Texas, and I fear we rendered harsh judgment.

The Richardsons live in a secluded spot five miles from Henderson²¹ but have more comforts than anyone we know. With few neighbors, it must be awfully lonely with only her little girl and Judge Richardson. Letters from Sarah Wadley from Homer [La.] where she is visiting the Barrs.

²⁰ The Confederate Congress adopted a measure on February 17, 1864, to reduce the currency by compelling noteholders to fund their notes for bonds or exchange them for new notes.—R. C. Todd, *Confederate Finance* (Athens, Ga., 1954), 112–13.

²¹ County seat of Rusk County, established in 1843.

All the Carson boys have gone out to the plantation. Mrs. Carson is much worried by her overseer who is managing her affairs dreadfully.

We have had quite a little affair with Mrs. Carson on the subject of buying blankets. She has a dozen pairs packed up. She should blush whenever she hears a blanket mentioned. She is most peculiar and selfish. It grows on her. She had rather Jimmy Stone would freeze to death in the army than to sell one of those packed up blankets—treasuring them for what greater need than now?

[Tyler, Tex.] *June 14*: Comfortably seated by an open window in our lone rocking chair, I am munching Confederate cakes²² all alone with nothing to do. Jimmy has galloped off to take a ride with "Mith Emily." Johnny is lying on his stomach with his heels in the air, under the spell of *The Wizard of the North* absorbed in *Ivanhoe*.²³ Johnny has taken great delight in Shakespeare and reads and re-reads his favorite plays. He is already a good Shakespearean scholar. Sister is amusing herself with Sally, and the others are off spending this day with Mrs. Prentice. If there is one thing I most detest, it is spending a long summer day away from home.

Mr. Bowman spent a few hours yesterday. He was taking home his overseer who had been wounded in the mouth and who is besides rather dodging the conscript officer.

Jimmy received a letter from Mr. Hardison telling of Mrs. Hardison's death in February. We are truly grieved to hear it. She was a high-minded good woman and one of our best friends. She died in Red River County,²⁴ where they have been living since fall. Her life was a scene of trial from the time they fled from home. He writes most sadly. They have no books, no papers, hear no news, and have made no new friends and are alone on the bleak prairie, strangers in a

²² Since sugar was virtually non-existent in the Confederacy after 1862, these cakes were probably made from a mixture of cornmeal and molasses.

²³ By Sir Walter Scott, published in 1819.

²⁴ Northeast of Tyler about seventy miles.

strange land. We pity them all but most, her poor mother, Mrs. Alexander.

Anna and Dr. Meagher returned a few days ago. He is stationed here now in charge of the Yankee prisoners. The prisoners are in a most pitiable condition, perfectly destitute. Some have only a blanket to wear and others only one garment. There is much sickness and death among them and the authorities are powerless to get clothes for them. No clothes or blankets to be bought.²⁵

Here come the boys.

[Tyler, Tex.] *June 19*: A letter from My Brother but dated three months ago. He writes very sadly and thinks he will not see us again until the war is over. He was safe on the fourth of May, but it was on the fifth that those terrible battles commenced. We see from the papers that his corps was engaged every day. The fate of Richmond still trembles in the balance. Lee's army has fallen back within the fortifications, and Grant is beginning to burrow as they did at Vicksburg. The most thrilling report is that Beauregard has captured Butler and 9,000 men. May it only be true. Louisianians would certainly shout with joy.²⁶ Long letters from Joe. They are still at Trenton [La.].

We have quite a trip in contemplation. Mamma is thinking of going to Monroe [La.] on business and taking me and one of the boys on for a pleasure jaunt. Which one of the boys depends on Mrs. Savage, who thinks of joining us with Emily. In that event Mamma will leave Jimmy at home as

²⁵ Shortage of food and clothing throughout the South generally made the problem of providing for prisoners an acute one. Camp Ford at Tyler once held as many as 6,000 prisoners in its ten-acre stockade. Conditions at Camp Ford doubtless were never as bad as they were at some Southern prisons.—Woldert, *A History of Tyler*, 39–40. For accounts of prison life at Camp Ford by inmates, see A. J. H. Duganne, *Camps and Prisons, Twenty Months in the Department of the Gulf* (New York, 1865); and Charles C. Nott, *Sketches in Prison Camps* (New York, 1865).

²⁶ The rumor was not true. "Beast" Butler, for so Louisianians continued to call him, succeeded in evading Beauregard's attempt to cut him off from his base of supply in the Battle of Drewry's Bluff, Va., April 16, 1864.—Douglas Southall Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants; A Study in Command* (New York, 1943), III; 483–94.

affairs are getting too interesting with Jimmy and Emily. He is too susceptible, and Mrs. Savage is too much of a match-maker for Jimmy to be hourly exposed to such fascination for the next two weeks. Emily is a designing, forward girl, exceedingly so for her age. Jimmy is making every preparation to go with us and join the army at Monroe and will be horribly disappointed if Mamma refuses her consent.

Our usual refugee visitors. Yesterday evening returning from a ride, Jimmy and I were called in by Mrs. Carson, who begged us to stay to supper, at which we enjoyed delightful venison, killed by Jimmy Carson, and some of Mrs. Carson's new style marmalade—excellent. Read the papers to Mrs. Carson and rode home in the most glorious moonlight.

Mamma is very sad since receiving My Brother's letter. She is very anxious about him. We have a nice set of real chessmen, made by one of the prisoners. We loaned them some days ago to the hospital in response to a polite note asking for them. The boys often go there. They have taken a great fancy to Mr. Griffin, a wounded boy. He must be a nice young fellow. Mamma and Mrs. Carson and some of the other ladies go quite frequently.

[Tyler, Tex.] *June 26*: This has been a busy week, clouded by the thought of Jimmy's departure. We are finishing off his clothes and renovating ours, for we will go with him as far as Monroe. Mrs. Savage and Emily will accompany us as far as Mrs. Norris'. What dampens our pleasure is the idea of going in that horrid old Jersey. We have had our own trials patching up our clothes. We had no idea we were so near being ragamuffins until we took an exhaustive survey of our underclothes. Oh, for bolts and bolts and more bolts of white domestic. If Mamma's trip proves successful, we will be able to better our condition as regards habiliments. Mamma is having quite a store of Texas goodies made up, such as Confederate cakes, "grape bully"²⁷ and such, to solace the inner man while on the road.

²⁷ This may have been grape butter, made by boiling the pulp of grapes down to a thick mass, then spreading it over a thin cloth to dry. Removed from the cloth, the dried butter could be chewed like dried beef or reduced to a mass again by boiling.

Hearing Mrs. Carson was sick, I rode over late in the evening with Eddie and Johnny to see her. Found her in bed looking very lonely. All the children away. At her earnest solicitation, we stayed to tea and late bedtime. Quite a pleasant evening. Katie and the boys are so pleased to have company. It was very dark riding in the woods, and I made firm resolves against riding horseback again at night, resolves I shall break this evening by going with Jimmy to say good-bye to Mrs. Prentice. She is very fond of him. The boys are off on their last grand hunt together in the morning. Mr. Michele, Miss Grissman, Dr. McGregor, Maj. Isaacson, Mrs. Savage's family, Mrs. Anderson, a delightful new acquaintance, and Maj. Randall are coming out this evening.

Friday there was a grand Masonic celebration that we, in common with all the town and county, turned out to see. Mr. Michele took possession of our party and Sally Grissman and established us in the most pleasant and also most conspicuous seats and then devoted himself to our entertainment. Lt. Alexander and Dr. McGregor took possession of a nearby window, and we all had a merry morning but did not profit by the speeches. A large crowd and barbecue dinner that Mr. Michele insisted was not clean enough for us to eat. "Why," said he, "should we dine with plebians?" I hope no native heard him. We went out, as Mamma said, "to see the animals feed." Then we (the select few) returned home to dinner, Mr. Michele remaining until night. He is a most amusingly entertaining companion and does so bemoan the absence of his wife. That night there was a party given at the hotel by Col. Anderson. He is in command, I think, of the Ordnance Department²⁸ here and is an old army officer. His wife is charming. Emily and I went, to our surprise, and spent a charming evening. It was a most mixed and odd-looking crowd. Neither Emily nor I possessed a party dress, but we did not bring discredit on the swamp and looked well enough. I did not think two months ago I would ever dance or care to talk nonsense again. But one grows callous to suffering

²⁸ An ordnance depot in connection with an ammunition factory was established in Tyler about 1862.—Woldert, *A History of Tyler*, 42.

and death. We can live only in the present, only from day to day. We cannot bear to think of the past and so dread the future. The refugees remind me of the description of the life of the nobility of France lived during the days of the French Revolution—thrusting all the cares and tragedies of life aside and drinking deep of life's joys while it lasted. This was our debut in Tyler society, and without self-flattery I may say we were quite a success.

I took a buggy ride yesterday with Dr. McGregor, who has a fine span of horses, and we just flew up and down (specially down) the hills. Enjoyed it highly, though I did think we would capsize on every hill we rushed down. On our return all the boys met us at the gate and could scarcely contain themselves at such a splendid opportunity for teasing, but the dread of future punishment at my hands kept them fairly in bounds.

A letter from Julia. She is to be married about this time and so regrets our absence and that I cannot be first bridesmaid.

[Near Oak Ridge, La.]²⁹ Aug. 23: Mamma and I came out to Monroe [La.] and Jimmy joined the army.³⁰ Mamma and I stopped here at Col. Templeton's, and then Mamma went on to the river and stayed with Mrs. Newman. She went in the old Jersey but came back in the pretty carriage that we have been wanting ever since we left home. She brought out a carriage load of dry goods that were most welcome. After staying here a few days, she returned to Monroe for a little stay with Mrs. Wadley and then on home by way of Homer where so many of our friends are established. We stopped there coming out, and they greeted us most cordially. We could not make much of a visit as Jimmy and Mamma were anxious to get on. Mrs. Templeton's family all insisted on my remaining with them until fall, and

²⁹ About twenty-five miles northeast of Monroe, La., in Morehouse Parish.

³⁰ Jimmy joined Colonel Isaac F. Harrison's brigade, an independent calvary regiment organized in the area in 1863.—Williamson, *North-east Louisiana*, 157.

then I could go back to Texas with Col. Templeton, who will go out to where the Negroes are beyond Tyler. Jimmy's command was camped near here and I could see much of him. Mamma and I knew it would be a delightful visit, and as she unselfishly and I selfishly wanted to stay, I did so and am having a most lovely time. All the family are so kind.

We are just back from a spend-the-day at Dr. Stewart's. Saw Cols. McNeils and Capers pass on their way to Oak Ridge to go into camp there again. Sitting in the hall, we caught the sound of the refugee whistle and soon Jimmy Stone and Willy Carson came walking up. Willy is just from Tyler. He joined his company last night and reports all well at home. Nothing new or strange going on with our friends there. His arm seems stiffer than when we saw him last. He passed through Shreveport the day after Mamma did.

What a horrible tragedy, the death of Mrs. Hull's two brothers, hanged as spies in Missouri where they had gone in disguise to recruit for Col. Hull's regiment. They were with him but he escaped and had the hardihood to go and see them hanged with the faint hope that he might effect their escape. But of course that was hopeless. He made his way out of the state with some men and met a number who knew him but was not betrayed. The men hanged were two gallant young officers of excellent family. I cannot recall their names just now, but their father was the editor and proprietor of one of the leading St. Louis papers and left a large fortune. Poor Mrs. Hull is heartbroken.

It is very warm but we enjoy our ease with open doors and windows, undressed and lounging around. No gentlemen staying in the house to molest or make us afraid. Emmie is busy on a dress that she has had on hand for two weeks. Mary is practising a delightful concord of sweet sounds, and I have been working on a flannel shirt for Jimmy. He and Joe passed several days with us last week—pleasant to us all. Jimmy is looking quite well and is in high spirits. Joe does not look well but is more cheerful than when he first came.

[Near Oak Ridge, La.] *Sept. 2:* Mrs. and Col. Templeton

are entertaining a Mr. Massengale, just from Texas with news of Capt. Jack Wylie. We may look for him any day now. He will bring three beautiful horses, which we three girls have already appropriated in imagination and expect to race over the whole countryside.

I am too used up by my ride, or rather run, of yesterday to do anything. We have been very busy for the last ten days, riding, sewing, singing, receiving visitors, and playing, but now that the Brigade has gone out to Tensas Parish, we will be quiet for a time. Even Walker's division is passing through en route to Arkansas, and so for the present we are left defenseless.⁸¹

The boys and Capt. Ewing were over frequently. Capt. Ewing is a captive of Em's bow and spear and Jimmy Stone is following suit. Unfortunately for my pleasure, the report is abroad that I am engaged. There is no truth in it, and it deprives me of much fun.

Lou and Mrs. Morris spent a night here this week, emerging from the swamp about 12 o'clock, pitch dark and rainy, on horseback, their carriage embedded in the mud. Mr. Templeton had to send horses to their relief, and it was late before the carriage could be brought out next day. They were quite worn out from the fatigue and the fright of being in the dark swamp alone with nobody but their driver. They came out to see the Morris boys before the command left but too late. Mamma stayed several days in Homer on her way back. I know she enjoyed it. I hope to make them all a visit on our return trip.

Mary, Em, and I have a lovely scheme on foot. We all want to go out to Texas with Col. Templeton with a baggage wagon, on three red horses with sidesaddles with Jimmy and Joe as outriders. Mary wants to know where her fun comes

⁸¹ General Walker left the division on June 17 to become commander of the District of Western Louisiana. He was succeeded by Major General John H. Forney. The division was in Monroe September 6-14, passed through Bastrop September 17, and arrived at Monticello, Ark., September 20. An attack on Camden by General Steele was expected.—Blessington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 270-77.

in if there are to be only two outriders. We could stop nearly every night with some friend, as we did coming out.

I have finished all of Jimmy's clothes and two dresses for myself, and I feel a real Louisianian once more—in the very heart of the swamp, suffocating with the heat, fighting mosquitoes, lazy and languid, little appetite, but luxuriating on fruit for breakfast, dinner, and supper and enjoying curds and cream. The swamp is my own dear land—most natural, most restful.

Mamma's trip to Yankeeland did much good to all of us. The carriage, and such a delightful one, is a great triumph. The dry goods are the greatest comfort, relieving our present necessities, and the books and papers are great entertainment. Some new songs were sent me by Mr. Reigart and Mrs. Newman or Miss Bettie Carter—"Just Before the Battle Mother," "The Vacant Chair," and others. In the swamp Mamma saw and heard so much it was a treat to hear her. Joe expects soon to be made lieutenant. Willy is sergeant major. Jimmy likes camp life so much. I am glad he has given up the idea of joining Col. Hull's command. Not a line from home. Jimmy and Joe spent the evening before the Brigade left and slipped off and came to breakfast next morning. They stayed until after dinner but expected to catch up with their command that night. It is not a dangerous expedition and they will soon be back.

[Near Oak Ridge, La.] *Sept. 5*: Intense excitement in the neighborhood. Yankees reported advancing in large force—destroying, burning, and murdering as they come!! Capt. Lea with his small band of guerrillas contesting every mile of the way but being steadily forced back by superior numbers! Praying Col. Parsons, who has the only troops near, for reinforcements, but who refuses to send them as he is under stringent orders and making forced marches!³² Blank consternation among the citizens who hear that the Federals have vowed vengeance against this section on ac-

³² Colonel M. M. Parsons commanded a brigade under General Price whose headquarters was in Arkansas.

count of Capt. Lea and his guerrillas.³³ Everyone is preparing to flee the wrath to come.

Such were the startling reports brought to Col. Templeton by terrified Mr. Philips this morning, frightening us nearly to death, for great is our horror of the vandal hordes since their ruthless destruction of Floyd and Pin Hook and their outrageous conduct at those doomed places. Mrs. Templeton soon had everything arranged for our rapid flight through the swamp across the Ouachita to the safe haven of Col. Wadley's home, should the reports prove true, leaving Mrs. Templeton and Mrs. Savage here to brave the storm, Col. Templeton going with us. We were on the *qui vive* all day looking for a mounted messenger galloping up through the wooded lawn shouting, "Flee, Flee." But about sunset the tension relaxed. We heard that the Yankees came out only as far as Floyd on a reconnaissance and are retiring to the river, and so we breathe freely once more.

The Yankee raids are no joke, though we laugh at each other for being frightened. Last week 200 of the Corps D'Afrique,³⁴ officered by six big white men (wretches they are), came out and laid the two little villages of Floyd and Pin Hook in ashes, not allowing the people to remove any of their possessions from their houses and thus leaving them utterly destitute. They were very rough and insulting in their language to the ladies, tore the pockets from their dresses and the rings from their fingers, cursing and swearing, and frightening the helpless folks nearly into fits. This was done in revenge for a guerrilla raid a few days before, in which a good many government stores were destroyed and eighty or ninety Negroes brought out. The Yankees know they make it ten times worse for us by sending Negroes to commit these atrocities. The Paternal Government at Wash-

³³ Though guerrilla activity continually went on in northeast Louisiana from early 1863 until the end of the war, records of the operations of guerrilla bands are fragmentary or non-existent. Captain Joseph C. Lea was the leader of one of these guerrilla organizations.

³⁴ A brigade of Negro soldiers under Colonel Isaac J. Shepard was stationed at Milliken's Bend and Goodrich's Landing at the end of the siege of Vicksburg in 1863. There is no record of how many of these troops were still in the area in 1864.—*Battles and Leaders*, III, 549.

ington has done all in its power to incite a general insurrection throughout the South, in the hopes of thus getting rid of the women and children in one grand holocaust. We would be practically helpless should the Negroes rise, since there are so few men left at home. It is only because the Negroes do not want to kill us that we are still alive. The Negroes have behaved well, far better than anyone anticipated. They have not shown themselves revengeful, have been most biddable, and in many cases have been the only mainstay of of their owners.

Five or six citizens, unarmed, were murdered by the Yankees in that Floyd raid. How thankful I am we left home when we did. To lose everything is bad, but constant terror and insult are worse.

The guerrillas report that the cotton crop on the river is a complete failure, entirely eaten up by the worms. The fields are swept of every vestige of green and there is hardly a matured boll to a stalk. This news rejoices our very hearts. Those are true "Confederate worms," working for the good of the Cause.³⁵

Emmie and I are practising singing. Neither of us is gifted with the voice of a siren, but enough to amuse the non-critical. Am making a calico dress which promises to be a love, if I can only get it long enough.

[Near Oak Ridge, La.] *Sept. 10:* The famed Brigade is back again after its hurried trip to Tensas, during which it managed to capture sixteen Yankees, kill three, and kill five of its own men by a badly placed ambushade. The object of the march was to take possession of a gunboat that was to be given up by treachery, but it proved a fiasco. Our opinion is that the officers all got on a grand spree and so failed at the critical time. Too disgraceful if true. Jimmy and Joe were two who volunteered to board the boat when volunteers were called for. I think there were eighty in all, but it proved they were not to board the gunboat but to

³⁵ The reference here is to the "abandoned" plantations being operated by Northerners.

form an ambuscade. How near death they were when they stood firing within fifteen paces of each other. It makes one shudder to think of it. What unnecessary risk and such culpable ignorance in the man who placed the ambuscade.³⁶

Jimmy came down the first night. We had been riding and met him on the way. Maj. Purvis and Capt. Erwin spent yesterday with us, and as Mrs. Templeton was away at Bastrop,³⁷ they were on our hands all day, which proved a very pleasant one. We sang and played the new songs and pieces for them, and they taught us cassino. We expect several of the "brass mounted" this evening. Soldiers, soldiers everywhere. Two sick ones were here for several days. The only remark one volunteered while here was when I refused cabbage—"Wal, you don't like cabbage, but you are death on curd." His manner and tone amused us all.

Em is complaining and Mrs. Templeton has administered her panacea for all ills, a quinine pill. Mrs. Templeton makes her girls swallow a pill at any and all times, and they are so hardened by long usage they do not mind it at all. Mrs. Templeton is a most anxious, nagging mother, perfectly devoted to her daughters, but at times they must find her trying. I am thankful for our Mother. She is so free of fads and fancies, so eminently sensible.

Several days of luxurious idleness for us all. Nobody with any sewing on hand. I am absorbed in *Zanoni*.³⁸ There are some fine roses here, and they are in fullest bloom. We wear them morning, noon, and night. "They are not born to blush unseen" while we girls and some soldiers are around.

[Near Oak Ridge, La.] *Sept. 21*: Our soldiers of Gen. Isaac Harrison's brigade bade us adieu a week ago starting on their long expected march into Arkansas.³⁹ Since which time we have been very quiet, only occasionally indulging in wild gallops over the country, frightening Mrs. Templeton

³⁶ These were troops of Harrison's brigade.

³⁷ Bastrop is about twenty-five miles northeast of Monroe.

³⁸ Bulwer's fourteenth novel, published in 1842.

³⁹ Harrison's brigade was ordered into Arkansas to join other Confederate troops there in anticipation of a Federal attack on Camden.

so that the last time she gave us all a good scolding and we promised to amble along more demurely in the future. But there is such excitement in a dashing run over good roads, well-shaded these fair fall days, that it is hard to restrain both ourselves and the horses. Much reading, a little sewing, and much idle lounging and jesting fill up the measure of our days, while the nights are filled with music and much sentimentalizing on the broad front gallery in the bright moonlight. Some of the soldiers were down most of the time and kept us amused.

[Near Oak Ridge, La.] *Sept. 27:* Capt. Wylie arrived the other day. He looks much like Mr. W. Wylie. He makes himself quite agreeable. I have just beaten both him and Mary a game of chess, and now they are playing a game together. A ride last evening. I mounted Capt. Gillispie's pet horse, War Eagle, which is remaining here while his master is away in Arkansas. He is delightful, like his master free and easy. "The Jack of Spades," otherwise Mr. Mickie, or Mickey (?), attended us and remained all night. Card playing and singing kept us up until after twelve. Mr. Mickie is one of Em's devoteds. We all rode up to Oak Ridge to church but there was no preacher. On our return we found Capt. Chambliss here, just from Tyler but with nothing of note to tell us.

We hear of the lamentable fall of Atlanta ⁴⁰ and rumors of its recapture, which we trust may be true. There is no further fear of a Yankee raid as there are very few troops left at Goodrich's Landing, and everyone seems to look for peace in the spring.

Capt. Wylie brought letters from Mamma. She says she cannot send for me, and so I must needs resign myself to a lengthy stay here until Col. Templeton is ready for his Texas trip. The Templetons are all exceedingly kind and certainly seem to like me to stay. Johnny writes an amusing letter to the boys which, as it is enclosed in mine and they are far away, I take the liberty of reading. I am glad the little fellow

⁴⁰ On September 2, 1864.

has a horse at last. What an intelligent, precocious boy he is. I wish Mamma could have sent him for me, but it is such a long expensive trip.

An amusing letter from Missie Morris in which she utterly repudiates the idea of our giving up as "Old Maids" for two years yet, when she will be willing to lay down the flower-wreathed scepter of girlhood and don the badge of spinsterhood.

Capt. Gillispie came in two days ago and has kept the house in an uproar ever since. He is overflowing with fun and frolic but is rather too familiar and something rude. He does not improve on acquaintance. I fear he is fast, a perfect opposite to tiny Mr. Kurrie[?], who came with him. We thought him at first about twelve years old, so quiet and solemn. He really is twenty. Capt. Gillispie taught us two new songs, "Who Will Care for Mother Now?" and "Paul Vane," an answer to "Lorena," but not so pretty.⁴¹ Wrote to Jimmy by Capt. Gillispie and sent Johnny's letter. We all went Saturday to Mr. Mickie's and had a most enjoyable time. They are most hospitable and live delightfully in the old style. A long, low, roomy house, gardens, orchards, and flowers, plenty of servants, and an abundant larder. Must stop and go to ride with Capt. Wylie.

[Near Oak Ridge, La.] Oct. 15: We have kept on the even tenor of our ways with no hairbreadth escapes by land or sea to ruffle the calm. There are still occasional reports of advancing Yankee raids, but all blow over and no Yankees yet, though this country is still defenseless. "Harrison's gallant Ouachita braves" are still in Arkansas, scouting near Pine Bluff. Em and I are kept in a state of pleasurable excitement by constant rumors of their swift return, but "they come not, oh no, they come not." From Joe's last letter it will be long before we welcome them back.

⁴¹ "Lorena" was the most popular love song in the Confederacy. First published in Chicago in 1857, it became the favorite of both soldiers and civilians during the war. "Paul Vane; or, Lorena's Reply" was by the same composers, Rev. H. D. L. Webster and J. P. Webster (no relation). "Who Will Care for Mother Now?" was a popular sentimental song by Charles C. Sawyer.—Harwell, *Confederate Music*, 86-87.

We have little company and pay few visits, but we enjoy the days, and the weeks fly by like magic—no startling events to mark them off. Capt. Wylie and Dr. Wylie are here. They amuse themselves during the day, but in the evening we all assemble, play chess or cards, and carry on long and animated discussions on all topics under the sun. All the older members of the family are very fond of argument and discussion and are thoughtful talkers and well educated, though one must know them some time before finding that last out. We made a rule fining everyone for each lapse in grammar, which worked famously for awhile, until we found we would soon all be bankrupt in both purse and temper, and by tacit consent it was dropped and grammar is no more alluded to. Mrs. Templeton said *she* knew she would never be fined. She knew every rule in the book, but she was the first and most grievous offender and hated worst to be reported. We all stay up until “the wee sma hours ayant the twae” when the gentlemen retire. We lounge in rocking chairs building fairy castles in the air, mapping out lives of goodness and noble endeavor, until Mrs. Templeton rouses from her half-doze on the bed and sends us all to rest.

I am victor over Capt. Wylie in chess, and Dr. Wylie and I are victors over the entire household in cards. Capt. Wylie and I generally play several games of chess every day. I like him better than at first. He is very lively and a great tease. We have occasional disagreements, but he always comes to terms.

Em and I came very near having our last ride a few days ago. We went out alone for the first time, and on our return, racing as fast as our horses could carry us, we wheeled in suddenly to the gate. Em lost her balance and was thrown backward off the horse. We were dreadfully frightened. I was afraid she was seriously injured. It was such a hard fall, but she was up in an instant and only slightly bruised. As soon as she saw her slight injuries, she was only anxious to keep the adventure from her mother as she knew it would be the knell of all horseback riding for her. So she bound all

the witnesses to silence. But I watched her closely for several days and, had she shown any symptoms of injury, would surely have made full confession. But as poor Em says, "Mamma does scold so provokingly." We have not ridden since.

Mamma's last letter enclosed one from Uncle Bo, our first for two years. He writes so affectionately. He says he is longing so to see us, calls me his dearest niece, and says he would give anything to be in service on this side of the river so as to be near us. How I long to see him.

My Brother and Jimmy's birthday has passed—one twenty-five, the other eighteen. How old we are growing. A long letter from Julia Street, as affectionate and gay as Julia Reed's letters. Jimmy saw her as he passed through Monticello.

Our pleasant days are drawing to a close as Mamma writes she will send Johnny at once for me, and we are looking for him every day. Capt. Brigham rode in from Monroe to tell us that the long expected tableau would come off the next evening and that he had come in to escort us out. Early the next morning we three girls and Sally McGraw with Jimmy, Capt. Wylie, and Capt. Brigham as outriders and the maid Henrietta bringing up the rear, made our way to Monroe under many difficulties. We had a most trying time after reaching there, owing to Capt. Brigham's blundering. We did not enjoy the tableau as we were too worried and were thankful to be all safe at Mrs. Templeton's next evening.

[Near Oak Ridge, La.] *Oct. 30:* The last time I shall write here. Johnny arrived with the carriage two days ago, and we start home tomorrow. This will end a most pleasant visit, or rather visitation, for I have been here more than three months. All the family have been unfailingly kind and have done all in their power to make me enjoy the time. I certainly have had a most charming visit and grieve to leave them. Then I shall have to break off two most promising flirtations. My only comfort is in thinking of the lovely trip Johnny and I are going to have—a comfortable carriage well stocked with lunches, a good driver, strong mules, no hurry,

and a lodging every night with friends, good roads, and fair October weather.

Johnny saw Jimmy and the other soldiers in Monroe on their way to Alexandria. Jimmy, Joe, and Capt. Ewing came down to see us as the Brigade passed through Bastrop. They stayed two days.

Johnny heard as he passed through Shreveport that Uncle Austin was to be married this week to Miss Nannie Simple, a girl of twenty-three—younger than either of his daughters.

[On the road to Texas] *Nov. 2*: We got off from Col. Templeton's Monday morning, all sorry to part after a delightful summer and fall with not a disagreeable incident to mar our intercourse. They have been the soul of kindness to me, one and all. The direct road through the swamp is impassable, and so Capt. Wylie piloted us a new route. Capt. Wylie, Johnny, and I were on horseback, and about 2 o'clock we reached the hill road without getting bogged down as Johnny had in coming through the old road. We dismounted, entered the carriage, and bade Capt. Wylie a warm farewell, thanking him for his many courtesies. He says we will see him at Christmas, but that depends on letters between now and then. I judge it will be useless for him to come. Col. Cochran had made himself very agreeable for some weeks. He also came for adieux. I think he and Sally McGraw will eventually make a match.

It was a rainy day and we did not reach Monroe until about sunset. Capt. Brigham met us, and we waved him adieu as we crossed the Ouachita on a flat. We passed the night at Mrs. Seale's at Trenton, much to Johnny's disgust as he does not like them. Some gentlemen called, and we had cards. After they left, Lucy and I tried our fortunes in divers ways as it was "All Hallow'e'en." We tried all magic arts and had a merry frolic, but no future lord and master came to turn our wet garments hanging before the fire. There were no ghostly footprints in the meal sprinkled behind the door. No bearded face looked over our shoulders as we ate the apples before the glass. No knightly forms of soldiers brave disturbed our dreams after eating the white of an egg half-

filled with salt.⁴² We waked in the morning to hear the rain pattering on the roof, but notwithstanding we drove on to Mrs. Wadley's, Lucy going with us. We passed two days there most pleasantly. We were so glad to see them all again. Nothing had changed. They were just the same as when we bade them good-bye when we started to Texas. Only William Wadley was away in Texas, suffering from an affection of the heart, Sarah told me. His mother had just succeeded in breaking up an engagement with a girl that she considered beneath him socially, and he was not at all pleased.

The third morning we left in a cold drizzling rain with a splendid lunch and a jar of pickles, and with kisses and good wishes of the family. I had a raging toothache, because of sitting all day in wet shoes after passing the swamp. Capt. Wylie's solicitude on the subject of my thin, wet shoes was not uncalled for at last.

Our trip to Vienna was disagreeable. We stopped at twelve, built a fire, enjoyed our dinner, and then smoked leaf cigarettes. They relieved my tooth for a time, but the pain returned. For several days I suffered intensely, nearly ruining all my teeth I fear by using creosote, caustic, and any strong thing people recommended. Our supper at the hotel at Vienna consisted of cold stewed pumpkins, cold greens, and cold white cornbread. Nothing else but cold well water. The breakfast was nearly as unpalatable, but it was warm.⁴³ We had nothing to eat all day except the pickles, which Johnny first ate and then drank the vinegar. We were quite ready to do justice to the nice supper we found ready spread when we drove up to Mrs. Barr's at 8 o'clock at night. We stayed there two days. They seemed charmed to have us. Then we had a two-day visit with the Morris girls, who were as always cordial and pleasant, and the rest of our

⁴² For explanation of these and other Halloween superstitions, see *Encyclopedia of Superstitions*, 48, 141, and 166.

⁴³ Vienna, the oldest Louisiana town west of the Ouachita, was on what was later called the "Old Wire Road" because of the telegraph wires strung along it. A two-story house built by John Huey served as an inn on the Monroe-Shreveport stage line and was probably the place where Kate and Johnny ate.—*Louisiana, A Guide to the State* (New York, 1941), 614.

stay in Homer was at Mrs. Amis's. Emmett was at home one night on furlough. He is funny in spite of his wild, rough ways. Annie and Mrs. Amis were most kind and begged us to stay longer. It did Annie good to realize that she was not my only friend in Homer. Saw Mrs. Harper and Mrs. DeFrance and most of our old friends. Mrs. Harper is firmly of the opinion that Lt. Valentine and I are engaged, if not, that we should be. Time will correct her mistake. The first night after leaving Homer we spent at Mr. Maples', a delightful place, a short distance out from Minden. All night long through the beating of the rain and the wailing wind, we could hear the screams of a poor mother whose little child was "lost and gone in the forest wild"—a wee tot of two years who had wandered away in the morning hunting nuts. When we left next day, the neighbors were still seeking for it.

We stayed a night and half a day with Mary Buckner. She has a pretty little baby about two weeks old, but she was not at all well. Mrs. Gustine seemed rather anxious about her.

We stayed one night at Marshall with Mrs. Felix Taylor. They are from our parish, but we had never met before. She was so friendly and hospitable that she just made us come in, and we enjoyed our stay there. She has such a family of girls, none grown.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Dec. 4:* We are just back from church, and it was a delightful walk there. Mamma, thinking the church would be too cold, deserted us at Mrs. Savage's and Mrs. Newton joined us. An excellent sermon from the new Baptist minister. There were many gentlemen but few ladies and quite a number of new officers, but Dr. McGregor, my only acquaintance. All the officers we knew here in June have gone. Dr. McGregor and Joe Carson, who is home on furlough, are our only visitors at present. Did not see Maj. Buckner in church. Suppose he has gone back to Louisiana. We have seen him frequently lately and he is a most agreeable, entertaining visitor. I wish they would station him here.

Anna Meagher and Emily Norris started yesterday for

Franklin Parish [La.],⁴⁴ Anna on a visit to Thekla and Emily to remain there and go to school. We have not seen much of them since we returned three weeks ago. We all spent Friday with them—a dull day and a rare peace dinner, oyster soup, bought pickles, guava jelly, etc., etc. Dr. McGregor and Mr. Williams, the new toast of the town, also were guests.

The house does not seem as comfortable as formerly. Living so delightfully for the last six months and being so waited on and petted have spoiled me I am afraid. Unfortunately Johnny and Uncle John are not on speaking terms. There was a general quarrel while Mamma was away, and Uncle John will not make it up. As Johnny is but a boy, it seems very unreasonable. As we are so crowded in the house, it makes it doubly disagreeable. Then Kate has added a new baby to the general confusion. Fortunately it is a good little mite, but we cannot say the same of Sally. She is a little trial but is getting to be quite pretty. Johnny makes a pet of her, since he is very fond of little children. If we only could have the house to ourselves, but there is no hope of that. Poor Uncle Johnny is so helpless.

Mrs. Morris, Zou, and Stafford were with us last week on their way to Navarro County [Tex.].⁴⁵ They speak of all moving to Texas. Mrs. Bruce wrote to Mamma asking her to secure a house for her. Since Mrs. Savage is to move to another part of town, Mamma rented her house. If she and the Lowrys come, they will be delightful additions to our society. A letter from Julia Street speaks of going into winter quarters with her husband. She seems perfectly happy.

The first news Johnny heard as we neared home was that his pony, the pride of his heart, had been stolen. The poor little fellow was dreadfully worried. He will never get that one again, but Mamma is trying to get another for him.

We have been busy sewing ever since my return renovating our old dresses. I embroidered four pretty cravats for "my four boys." My particular pet Jimmy Carson will

⁴⁴ About thirty miles southeast of Monroe, La.

⁴⁵ In north central Texas, between Dallas and Waco.

go back with Joe and join the army. How we shall miss all the boys, only Johnny and Eddie left of all the band. Johnny has been up on the prairie nearly ever since we got back. He is trying to buy a horse for himself and one for Jimmy. We look for him this evening. We shall be very busy for awhile making up clothes for Jimmy. We will take them to him. Mamma confided one of my indiscreet remarks about Joe and Jimmy Stone being the worst dressed boys in the brigade to Mrs. Carson, and Mrs. Carson has been in a perfect rush ever since getting good clothes for Joe. Everything nice she gets she at once brings it over for me to see, much to my amusement. I am glad it had such a happy effect. Joe certainly looks better. He is nearly handsome now in a new suit of Confederate grey. Mrs. Templeton would rejoice to see him.

I found Mamma trying to do without a paper, but I at once subscribed for this necessity of life. We find the carriage such a comfort. Have paid up all our calls.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Dec. 8*: Mamma has just received two letters from My darling old Brother, one of September 25, the other October 8. He was quite well but said he has passed through some of the bloodiest battles the Army of Virginia has ever fought. We are so proud of his gallantry. One extract gladdened our hearts. He says,

Our Brigade has fully sustained its former reputation in the battles of the summer, some of them the bloodiest the Army of Virginia ever fought. In the battle of the Wilderness with twenty-three men, I captured a Captain, two Lieutenants, and eighty-one men of the New York 22nd Cavalry with their horses and arms. We captured the Major and twenty more men, but they escaped while we were bringing them in. I believe I am the only line officer of the Brigade who has been mentioned in official reports during the campaign.

He knew we would not hear it unless he told us, for we never get a Richmond paper. He, for the first time, has had the grace to tell us of some of his valiant deeds. He is a son

and brother we may all well be proud of. He thinks we will not see him this winter.

[Tyler, Tex.] *Dec. 10*: Dear little Beverly, that angel upon earth, has left us. The pure spirit has winged its way to its Heavenly home. Darling little Beverly. What a sad despairing letter her father wrote bearing the bitter news of her death. They are utterly heartbroken. She was the one great treasure of their lives. The pure little spirit is freed now, but all the sunshine of life to them lies buried in that tiny grave. She died October 2 of sore throat at Selma, Ala. She was the one perfect being I have ever known in face, in figure, in mind, in heart—not one improvement could be suggested. We have several times heard people who were not related to her say, after playing with her, "That child will not live to grow up; she is too perfect." That seemed to be the general feeling of all their friends in Vicksburg who had known her always. She was too fair and frail a flower to blossom in this time of death and destruction. Our loved ones form a bright band now in "that Sunny Land where darkness cometh never." There was never a sweeter, lovelier little creature than our "Swamp Lily," as she loved us to call her. May Our Father comfort and strengthen her poor mother, for her life is bound up in the child's.

We were shocked and distressed to hear of Mary Gustine's death. We were there on one Thursday and she died on Sunday. Her mother seemed a little anxious, but no one else thought her much ill. A noble, generous, and beautiful woman, she was one of our most valued friends. This is the first break in the circle of happy girls who erstwhile met at Brokenburn. Her mother, who is in wretched health, will continue to live with Capt. Buckner, and she and Ella will take charge of the baby. That family is utterly broken up—one brother in prison and another desperately wounded—and not a month ago they were congratulating themselves on how wonderfully they had escaped all sorrow in this season of general disaster and despair. Truly, "We know not what a day may bring forth."

[Tyler, Tex.] *Dec. 13:* Jimmy has sent his boy Henry home for a horse, clothes, and money. Jimmy traded his two horses for a mule that Henry has broken down coming home and bought another mule to ride until Henry gets back with fresh importations. We judge that Jimmy is not much of a jockey. He wrote to Mamma and indignantly remonstrated with me for giving his much desired gloves to Capt. Wylie, a thing I never thought of doing. Should I not try to make my own brother comfortable first of all? So I wrote a touching disclaimer of any such offense.

The boys were over and stayed until bedtime. Joe is out on the farm. Katie Carson has the measles and I carried Sister and Annie Nicholson over to see her. All stayed until bedtime. She is getting on very well.

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1865

"The darkest hour"

[“Bonnie Castle,” Tyler, Tex.] *Jan. 29*: Uncle Johnny and Kate have just gone to their room after a lengthy discussion of the comparative merits of modern poets and novelists. Johnny has kissed me goodnight, Sister is wandering in dreamland, I am alone with a cheerful fire and a wakeful spirit, and so I may as well resume my neglected diary. Mamma, with Sarah as her maid, started on Wednesday for the prairie to be absent two weeks, and I am left to administer affairs during her absence. The office of housekeeper is not entirely a sinecure now that there are so many to be provided for—our family, Uncle John’s, and Mr. Gary’s. We tease Mamma and Mrs. Savage by telling them they are keeping boarding houses, a fact they indignantly deny. But it looks that way to an outsider. We hoped to get Mr. Smith’s house and live to ourselves, but he now declines to rent. But for the hall, we are as much crowded here as at the Ranch, which we had to give up to the owner as he wished to move back. This is a pretty-looking place—if the house was painted—but new and unfinished, a large yard with the native trees left. Mr. and Mrs. Gary, from whom Mamma rented it, are quite nice people. They have one little girl and they give very little trouble. We rarely see them except at meals, which is a relief, for we did so dread her living in our room. Even Kate leaves us to ourselves sometimes, and so we find it much easier to live together. Though both Uncle Johnny and Kate utterly ignore Johnny’s existence, it is wonderful that they will behave so.

Jimmy and Joe Carson have rejoined their command. It is Jimmy’s first trial as a soldier. I am trying to finish a pair of

the prettiest riding gloves to send him by Jimmy Stone's boy, who will get off Wednesday. I am sending Jimmy Stone a famous pair. Dr. Weir would feel himself awfully slighted and retire in disgust could he peep behind the scenes and see what becomes of the precious gauntlets he forced on my acceptance. He flattered himself I would knit a pair of gloves to them and kindly bestow them on him. But oh no, they go with the best I can make to Jimmy. I have knitted so many gloves, and Mamma knits socks in all her spare time. I wish I had kept account of the numbers of pairs. We froth up old black or blue silk, mix it with wool, and have it spun into a pretty silky thread that makes nice-looking gloves or stockings.

Dr. Weir is our most frequent visitor and now comes up two or three evenings in the week. Fortunately, he is easy to entertain as he does all the talking, and, if we weary of that, he is willing to play chess or cards by the hour. Capt. George Birchett from Vicksburg, whose family we have known always, was a constant visitor the few weeks he was here. He came in every day he was in town at any and all hours, quite *en famille*. He is cheerful and full of life, easy to amuse and to tease. We saw so much of him and Dr. Weir that we had not time to really miss our old habitués, Joe and Jimmy Carson. Capt. Birchett declares Sally Cox is the "vampire of his existence." Madame Rumor has given them to each other time and time again, but he indignantly denies the soft impeachment. The report was a fruitful source of amusement to me and annoyance to him until Mamma and he concocted some absurd story about Dr. Smith and me, and then I surrendered and signed a truce—no word of Sally Cox, no word of Dr. Jim Smith. Capt. Birchett will be back in a short time. He is exchange agent and enjoys himself to the uttermost, going about from post to post and out to the blockading fleet with flags of truce.

So slowly news comes in that we have heard nothing since Sherman's occupation of Savannah more than a month ago and Gen. Hood's retreat across the Tennessee River. The *on-dit* is that Hood is relieved from command and Gen.

Johnston reinstated, a rumor that gives general satisfaction.¹ The very air is rife with rumors but nothing reliable. The favorite is that the Confederacy will certainly be recognized by all foreign powers immediately after the fourth of March, and we may look for a speedy peace with much more to the same. But we have been exalted and depressed by these rumors too often to let them weigh with us now. Another topic of general interest is the subject of gradual emancipation said to be under discussion in the lower house. Meanwhile

*The days hold on their wanton pace
And men to court and camp repair
Their part to fill, of good or ill,
While women keep the town of Quair[?].*

[“Bonnie Castle,” Tyler, Tex.] *Feb. 1*: An occasional letter from Jimmy. He had just returned from our old home near the river. How strange it seems for the boys to be going home and wandering at will over the whole country, not a Yankee to be seen. The army worms were our best allies. They made the enemy abandon the country when our soldiers were powerless to drive them off. There are rumors of an armistice, recognition by the powers, and emancipation of the slaves.

Raining today. Could not start Jimmy's boy back. Jimmy must think Henry is never coming. Have nearly finished Jimmy Carson's gloves. His hands are none of the smallest and knitting the gloves has been a task.

Have been reading the life of Stonewall Jackson. He was worthy to be idolized by all classes as he is. Have just finished *The Hour and the Man* by Miss Martineau, purporting to be a historical novel with Toussaint L'Overture, the leader of the insurrection in San Domingo, as the hero.² He is represented as superhumanly good and great beyond

¹ After the loss of Atlanta, General John B. Hood attempted to recoup the military situation by invading Tennessee. In December he was badly defeated at Nashville and had to retire into Mississippi.—*Battles and Leaders*, IV, 425-39.

² This novel by Harriet Martineau (1802-76), published in 1840, was called “an early *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.”

all heroes of ancient or modern times. He and Napoleon were contemporaries and comparisons are constantly drawn between them, all in favor of this darkie saint. Napoleon is completely overshadowed by Toussaint. It is a disgusting book. The Negroes are all represented as angelic beings, pure and good, while the whites are the fiends who entered in and took possession of their Eden, Haiti.

Anna Meagher returned recently and sent for me to come and see her. She saw Jimmy several times. He is quite well. Her only news was about the Terrapin Neck cutoff which, if true, will place all our plantations above possible overflow. The Yankees are all gone and some of the old planters still at home. Jimmy sent by Anna the box of papers left concealed and all are in good order. We have written him to bring out the silver if possible. It is buried there. The old Negroes are still on the place, and Uncle Hoccles and Aunt Liza want to come out to Texas.³ Mrs. Newman was about to give a Yankee party. Both girls are at home and reported engaged to Yankee officers. One cannot believe that news. *Nous verrons*. We hear that Annie Newman is a beauty and a belle. Surely the age of miracles has not passed.

The pouring rains continue, and the house leaks dreadfully. We rather wade than walk.

[“Bonnie Castle,” Tyler, Tex.] *Feb. 12*: Mamma is still away, and from the condition of the roads we know not when to expect her. We miss her dreadfully, but we have had much company. Mrs. Carson has been sick, and we walk over there nearly every evening. Poor Mr. Alexander died recently, and Mrs. Hull, who had been sitting up all night, sent for me early one rainy morning to come and relieve her. I remained until dark, a most dreary day, for though Mr. Alexander was the merest acquaintance, we felt for his wife and children. The duty of visiting the sick and afflicted is one of life’s greatest trials.

³ Uncle Hoccles came to Texas with the Stones in 1863 but returned to Brokenburn with some of the family on their trips back there. He came to Texas again sometime after this date. Among the older Negroes who remained at Brokenburn throughout the war was Uncle Bob.

Met a delightful gentleman when I spent the day at Mrs. Savage's. He is Dr. Boone, a Missourian, handsome, elegant, the Medical Director for the Northern District, and is stationed at Bonham. He is trying to get Dr. McGregor to exchange with him. I only wish they will. He would be a social acquisition. He called with Dr. Weir yesterday morning and soon challenged me to a game of chess. I won the first and he the second and so the championship is undecided. He is to come as soon as he returns to play the decisive game. Mrs. Savage is charmed with him. I saw her this evening at Mrs. Carson's. As she is never happy unless matchmaking, she was begging me to set my cap for him. For what she knows, he may have a wife and a roomful of hopefuls and if free is the very man to have a sweetheart at every post. Mrs. Savage really misses having no girl on hand to scheme for. Capt. Birchett is here again. He makes himself at home and very agreeable. Dr. Weir still has the contract for entertaining me two or three nights in the week. I am going to ride with him tomorrow, and the next night, I will accompany him to a concert. He asked me to attend a party last week, but I am not going to dances. Lt. Dupre, we see frequently. He is a Creole from New Orleans, very agreeable, a young married man whose family are in New Orleans, and he is very homesick to see his wife and babies. A letter from Capt. Wylie begging me to let him come out Christmas, but his family have all been too kind to me for me to encourage his coming just for amusement. A long, pleasant, and amusing letter from Mary Templeton, but no special news.

A letter from My darling Brother to Mamma, dated November. His company is reduced to only eighteen men. He is very anxious to be transferred to this side of the river. His letter is on fancy Yankee paper captured at his last battle, Boydton (?) Station R. R. Heard from Jimmy by George Richards, who spent a night last week on his way home on furlough. Jimmy is well and not suffering for clothes. Uncle Bob has given him a pair of pants. Uncle Bob has hired several men and will plant part of the place

this year. The boys go in to the old places constantly, hunting guerrillas. Joe and Jimmy Carson had arrived in camp but without Dan. Eddie went out looking for him and found him near Marshall, headed him the right way, and so he must be there now.

I sent Henry to Jimmy with a supply of winter clothes that Mamma had prepared more than a week ago. We hear today the enemy are advancing on Monroe. If so, we do not know when Henry will find Harrison's brigade. Reports of a great battle between Lee and Grant. Our forces victorious.

There is no sewing hurrying us now. Sister gets off early to school after our usual breakfast, beef and biscuit, syrup, and homemade coffee—monotonous, but the best we can do. The Garys and Uncle Johnny's family go to their rooms, and Johnny and I shut ourselves up in Mamma's room, he to devote himself to *Horace Legendu* [?] and such studies. He is studying well. There is not much housekeeping as the servants are efficient, and that is soon off my hands. We have some morning callers as the townspeople are taking us up. Kate and the children run in and out all the time, rather disturbing Johnny's mind, but he goes off somewhere about the house and finishes his lessons. A letter from old Mr. Valentine. Lt. Valentine has entirely recovered.

[“Bonnie Castle,” Tyler, Tex.] *Feb. 13*: Great Peace rumors are afloat,⁴ and Gen. Lee has certainly given Grant's army a good drubbing. If he could only have annihilated them, we could sing *te deums*. God grant our dear boys may be unhurt. Dame Rumor is furloughing every fifth man in the Virginia Army who lives on this side of the Mississippi, and there is so much good news that the multitudes are jubilant. The more hopeful predict peace by July, but I

⁴ In the summer of 1864 a “peace movement” developed in the North as a result of dissatisfaction with the stalemate of the war, and Lincoln's chances for re-election seemed small. The victory at Atlanta, however, turned the tide and he was elected. On February 3, 1865, Lincoln and Seward representing the United States met with A. H. Stephens, R. M. T. Hunter, and J. A. Campbell representing the Confederacy at Hampton Roads, Va., to confer on a possible peace. The conference was a failure.—Randall, *The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 675–78.

think it will not come before October is painting the woods in autumn hues. What a lovely season it will be to journey home with peace blessed peace quieting all the land and nothing to molest or make us afraid. How joyfully will we take up our line of march for dear old Louisiana. What a merry cavalcade we shall be.

How the shriek of that steam whistle startled me, transporting me for the minute to the bank of the far rolling Mississippi.

Mrs. Bruce must think we are agents for renting houses. A letter from her introducing Capt. Pritchard, and one from him asking us as a great favor to rent a house for his family, who are on the way and will be here in about two weeks. Will wait until Mamma gets back, and then we will go on another house-hunting expedition. It is rather a trying job as the owners of the houses wish us to be responsible for the rent, and in this case we do not even know the people. These wily Texans want to bind one with all kinds of written documents, unintelligible but terrible in my eyes. I would not sign one for anything. Mamma attends to all that.

Have just finished the *New York News* of January 4. It is strongly in favor of peace and very encouraging to the South. The "Personal" for North and South is a new feature in newspaper work.

This long spell of bad weather still detains Mamma, and we are very anxious for her to get home. Then, our larder is growing startlingly poverty stricken. Our *boarders* must be thinking of giving notice.

Yesterday Little Sister fell off the gallery striking her head on a rock pile, making several deep gashes, and today it pains too much for her to attend school, though she took her music lesson. Little Sally has improved so much. She is a pretty curly-headed little thing with golden hair and blue eyes and is a great pet with us all. But she can never take Beverly's place in our hearts—the perfect little child only lent to earth to show mortals how fair are the angels in Heaven.

How kind old Mrs. Buckner has been to My Brother. She

corresponds regularly with him. He enclosed one of her letters in his last—of November. He goes to Lynchburg to see them whenever he can.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *Feb. 15*: Our garrison is reinforced and heavily provisioned.

Warren reached here tonight after a six-day trip from the prairie with the long looked-for load of comestibles, and never could they have come in better time. The last flour had just been made up into biscuit in Capt. Birchett's honor, and meat, sugar, candles, and everything else was waxing low. By the way, the servants make such pretty candles now. The candles look almost like wax. They boil a species of cactus in the tallow, and the candles are partly transparent and brittle and give an excellent clear light. Warren says the roads are nearly impassable. Mamma, when he left the carriage, was bogged down a few miles beyond Quitman,⁵ but Warren is satisfied that she will reach here today or tomorrow.

Capt. Birchett, after keeping me at home all day and depriving me of the pleasure of a ride with Dr. Weir, came up to tea and soon after bade us adieu for Shreveport and does not expect to be back for some weeks. We will miss him as he has been very sociable. Jolly Col. Hill and his demure, prim little wife called this morning and later Mrs. Benton and Mrs. St. Clair. No news except Mrs. Alexander, who lately lost her husband, will leave in a few days for San Antonio. And Johnny and I are eager to rent that house by the time Mamma arrives. Such a nice two-story affair with a pretty flower yard and in a nice part of town.

Dr. Weir spent yesterday afternoon here playing chess, and after tea I went with him and Capt. Birchett to a concert. Such a crowd. Not another person could have been crammed in and so many soldiers, but they were quiet and behaved well. The gentlemen all had to stand and my escorts were disgusted.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *Feb. 21*: Another rainy day. But Mamma is at home all right, and we are very

⁵ A small community about thirty miles north of Tyler.

glad to have her. Ben Clarkson came in Saturday on his way to see his people on his first furlough. He has been away two years and a half. He is a handsome fellow and scarcely looks older than when he left. How delighted his father will be to see him. He has only a twenty-day furlough, and it has taken him that long to get here. He will stay at home a month and rejoin his company at Tupelo, Miss. How vividly his presence recalls my two brothers. Had they lived, they might now be making us happy with their glad presence.

Sunday we all attended the Baptist church which was crowded to overflowing. We occupied a seat with some soldiers and their rations and came away with a goodly portion of the week's rations whitening our skirts. Dr. Weir asked to walk home with us. I told him we came in the carriage when he innocently enquired had I not rather walk. Decidedly, I had not. Spent this afternoon playing chess with him. I beat him so easily now there is no fun playing with him. No news and the household amusement is in "running rigs" on me. Dr. Weir is an inexhaustable theme for Johnny's mischief-loving spirit. He is here so much that I find him most tiresome. Though I do go horseback riding with him frequently, it is impossible to be bored when one is well mounted and scampering over the hills. Dr. Boone called yesterday to bid us good-bye and to remind Mamma of her promise to send for him when we go to the prairie this summer to spend a few weeks. He is such an elegant, polished gentleman, and we like him very much. We have seen much of him during this stay, and I am four games ahead on chess, an unexpected defeat to him as he prides himself on being a scientific player. He imagined when he came to play with me that he had only to say, "*veni, vidi, vici*," but my "skstrategy" out-generaled him. His brother married Betty Smith, that arch little coquette. Capt. Birchett was giving us an amusing account of his experience with that pretty Dresden figure, a great little flirt.

Capt. Boren is a pleasant new acquaintance, a Texan and charmed with the Louisianians he has met—so he says.

Saturday we—Mamma, Kate, and I—went calling on Mrs. Savage, Mrs. Prentice, and poor Mrs. Alexander. She seems quite crushed and to know nothing of business. Her husband left a large estate, stores scattered over half the state. Mrs. Savage's carriage is broken and she cannot get out. Mrs. Carson has withdrawn from society and rarely leaves the house, and as we are tired of doing all the visiting we rarely see her. She will have to renew the old friendship, and that she may never care to do.

We hear the Peace Commission returned without effecting anything. Our only hope for peace this year now lies in emancipation or intervention.

[“Bonnie Castle,” Tyler, Tex.] *March 3*: Our interest for the last ten days has centered on the all-engrossing theme of tableaux. All the society young folks of the town with Mamma as head and front of the affair are busy getting up an entertainment, tableaux, music, and charades, to raise money for establishing a soldiers' home. The natives, very unexpectedly, asked us to take part; and as Mamma knows more of such things than all the rest of them put together, she soon found herself sole manager of the affair and I am her “sub.” I have taken no part but they kindly allow me to attend all rehearsals, and I have had a gay time but for being bored to extremity by Dr. Weir, whom I nearly hate. We have become acquainted with all the *crème de la crème* of the city, and from one to a dozen are always dropping in to discuss something or ask Mamma's advice. I know most of the love affairs of Tyler now. I hope Janie Roberts and Lt. Alexander will make a match. They are very much in love with each other and it would be quite suitable. The young people have rehearsed here several times when it was too bad to go to the church.

A letter from Jimmy in which he says if I have any regard for suffering humanity to drop a few lines to Capt. Wylie. I really do not think the few lines I would send him would make him happy—less so than he is now, perhaps. Jimmy says the Yankees did little damage in their raid on Monroe. Fortunately, they did not visit Col. Templeton's where they

might have captured Jimmy and Hutch Bowman. Jimmy was nursing him there.

Anna Meagher was asked to play at the entertainment but some feeling of pique prevented her, and they all speak most contemptuously of the whole affair. But we are glad the ice is at last broken, and we are friends with the people of the town. It is far more agreeable, and there are many nice people when one finds them out. Mollie E. Moore, a poetess, is a charming girl and we are becoming quite friends.⁶ They live near. The other refugees can laugh at us if they like, but we are having the most enjoyable life.

We have been once to see Mrs. Carson. She has moved into town but is living very uncomfortably. She speaks of going North to her brother. It would be a good thing for her to do, just herself and Katie and Eddie seem a lonely trio. She is very peculiar. She lives in the skimpiest way, yet she has quantities of things packed away. She has twelve or fifteen pairs of fine blankets, yet will not sell a pair no matter what soldier wants them. Mamma tried to buy a pair for Jimmy, finding it impossible to get them anywhere, and Mrs. Carson sent over as a present a pair of crib blankets which were worn till they were thin, but wrote she could not think of selling a pair—might need them. Mamma sent those back as they were useless for a soldier. Then, Mrs. Carson has seven complete chamber sets, bowls, pitchers, etc. As long as we lived together, she never unpacked a set, but all of us

⁶ Mollie E. Moore, whose poetry had by this time been published in newspapers in Tyler and Houston, became one of Texas' most widely known writers after the Civil War. In 1874 she married Thomas E. Davis, who in 1889 became editor of the New Orleans *Picayune*, and as Mrs. Davis she became a social leader in New Orleans. Between 1888 and 1908 Mrs. Davis published thirteen books of poetry, fiction, and history and became nationally known. An excellent study of the complicated problem of Mrs. Davis' biography is Clyde W. Wilkinson's "The Broadening Stream; The Life and Literary Career of Mollie E. Moore Davis," unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of Illinois (Urbana, 1947). See also Mr. Wilkinson's sketch on Mrs. Davis in *The Handbook of Texas*, I, 470-71. Selections from Mrs. Davis' prose and poetry appear in *Library of Southern Literature*, III, 1273-1308; selections from her poetry appear in Sam H. Dixon, *The Poets and Poetry of Texas* (Austin, 1885), 34-44, and in Hilton R. Greer, *Voices of the Southwest; A Book of Texan Verse* (New York, 1923), 16-19.

used a small wooden pail [?] and a big wash tub. She has since taken one set out for her room. All her silver is packed away, and she uses pewter and heaviest stoneware, cracked and discolored, with two full sets of china stored in the yard. She has six carpets and numerous rugs in the storeroom and uses a ragged rug on a bare floor. She is certainly odd.

Mamma has rented Mrs. Alexander's place, the prettiest home in Tyler, but will not get possession until the first of May. Mamma has been troubled trying to decide what was best to do and decided on this. Mr. Gary is quite trying, so dictatorial and argumentative, and as Uncle John is something that way himself, it is not pleasant. The house we are in belongs to Mr. Gary, and we board them for the rent of it.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *March 9:* The tableaux passed off as a grand success and made quite a nice sum of money. It is quiet now. Most of our soldier friends have left, one new acquaintance remaining, Lt. Holmes, a Louisianian. He took part in the entertainment and we saw him frequently. Before he came, Lt. Dupre told us he was so "fast" that he would not bring him to the house, but he came with someone, and as far as we can tell is behaving all right. He seems full of life and fun.⁷ Very glad to say we have seen the last of Dr. Weir, and Mr. Williams, the irresistible, has bidden us a last adieu. A letter from Mrs. Bruce. Carrie Polk has a little son two months old and they will move out now right away. Julia is at Jefferson with her mother and expects a little stranger in April.

A letter written December 28 from My Brother to Mamma. He received mine of October 25 from Oak Ridge as a Christmas gift on December 25. He does not write as cheerfully as we would like to have him. He sends one piece of

⁷ Henry Bry Holmes, born in 1837, was the son of Henry and Julia Bry Holmes and the grandson of Judge Henry Bry, native of Switzerland, who came to Fort Miro (Monroe), La., in 1803. Judge Bry owned a large plantation on the Ouachita River, part of which is now in the city limits of Monroe, and Layton Castle, one of the show places of Monroe, embraces within its walls part of the original Bry home.—*Louisiana, A Guide to the State*, 294; Williamson, *Northeast Louisiana*, 121–35. Lt. Holmes served with the Pelican Grays of Monroe, La.

news that gladdens our hearts. Eugenia Rossman is really and truly married at last to Charley Allen, so availing my forebodings of sisterhood. I do not think the breaking of his bonds hurt him greatly. I hope not. Anyway, he has had many a love.

It seems odd to think of Julia and Carrie as mothers. It is such a few months since they were married. I have been thinking of them as brides. Time flies.

My Brother says I must hunt up a new sweetheart for him. I have selected Annie Amis. They have my consent to a mutual love affair.

Mamma received today her application for My Brother's transfer. It was disapproved, and so that ends our last hope of seeing him "until this cruel war is over."⁸ We hear all the troops on this side are to be ordered across the river to reinforce the Army of Virginia. When we hear from Jimmy again, their command may be marching over. It is a dark hour for us now. Only bad news, but the darkest hour is just before the dawning.

Miss Mollie Moore, "the Texas song bird," has been very kind, lending us books, among others new novels by Miss Braddon, sent her by Col. Duganne.⁹ They promise to be quite interesting. I am hoarse from reading aloud so long tonight. Mamma was tired and lying down. It has been too cold today to do anything but hover over the fire and read. Spent yesterday with Mrs. Carson who looks dreadful.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *March 17*: All are away this bright spring afternoon on pleasure bent, and I am alone at home to nurse my troublesome throat. It has pained me greatly for the last week. Had to call the doctor in twice, but it is improving now.

Only flying rumors, but more encouraging. Mrs. Bruce is

⁸ "When This Cruel War is Over," by popular composer Charles Carroll Sawyer with music by Henry Tucker, was one of the most popular songs, North and South, of the Civil War period.—Harwell, *Confederate Music*, 87.

⁹ Evidently A. J. H. Duganne, who was a prisoner at Camp Ford and who described his experiences in the South in his *Camps and Prisons, Twenty Months in the Department of the Gulf*.

looked for every day. We have had a number of visitors as our house, like every house where Mamma lives, has become a great resort. There is generally some one or a dozen here. Have had to talk straight on in spite of my croaking voice, and it tires one so. Yesterday two of Mamma's protégés from the hospital spent the day. Later Capt. Smith came in and a little later Capt. Boren to say good-bye. He is off to his company. He was a pleasant visitor and we are sorry to see him go. Later, Mamma and Kate went to pay some calls and left Capt. Smith to my mercies. He made himself most amusing, and I was surprised by unexpected gifts of mind and manner. He is a capital storyteller and has a fund on hand. He tore himself away at dark, and after tea we sat down to finish *Lady Audley's Secret*,¹⁰ which we find very interesting, when Lt. Dupre and Capt. Birchett were announced. There we were bound to the altar of entertainment for the next three hours. Mamma and I were both unwell and tired out, and we did wish a kind providence had directed their steps in another direction. To add to our "malaisements" Capt. Birchett, usually so easy to talk to, was so tipsy he could scarcely keep awake. I knew he behaved queerly, more quiet than I ever knew him, but I did not guess what was the matter until Mamma's disgusted exclamation as soon as the door closed behind them. This visit certainly puts him in our black books, and we cannot understand what Lt. Dupre meant by coming with a man in that disgusting condition. Lt. Dupre is just from Shreveport. Heard that Rosa Green has married a Yankee captain. Can it be true?

I am busy knitting a pair of gloves for Capt. Birchett, but now that he has been here in such a state I do not think I shall give them to a wild man like that.

Just finished *Memorials of Hood*, such an interesting work. What a life of patient endurance and hardships borne with such cheerfulness. Writing his life seems a labor of love to his children. Mamma and I went around in the carriage and

¹⁰ Published in 1862, the first of fifteen novels by popular novelist Mary Elizabeth Braddon (1837-1915).

paid all our calls. I went to a dance, quite enjoyable. A new acquaintance, Mrs. Capt. Polys, is quite an addition. Johnny is calling me for a walk.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *March 24*: Mamma and Mollie Moore have just gone on a visit to the hospital. Johnny is lounging in the rocker plying me with questions with his eye so bruised and blackened he can scarcely see, the effects of his first fisticuffs. He had a regular fight yesterday with a Tyler boy and says he came off decidedly second best. He is sore and stiff today. He declares he fought the boy from a sense of duty because the boy had been insulting to the girls at school and partly, I think, for his teacher Mr. Hand's sake. He entered the field of combat in the real spirit of Don Quixote, for he had no personal injury to avenge. He feels better now that he has worked off some of his superfluous steam. He has been at boiling heat for a month, eager for a fight. We think he will settle to his studies now with renewed interest. He has a satisfied look, long a stranger to his face. We are glad he and Eddie have smoked the calumet of peace. He was much disappointed at being unable to attend Mr. Smith's school.

Mrs. Prentice, Amy Quays, and Dr. Weir spent a dull evening with us, and we passed a dreary day at Mrs. Savage's with only the family. It provokes me to hear Mrs. Savage, Anna, and all of them harping on their devotion to Jimmy, praising him to the skies and speaking quite as though he were a member of their family. Mrs. Savage thinks she has secured Jimmy safely for Emily, but we hope that it is one match she will fail in making. What a matchmaking old lady she is, and she quite prides herself on it now. That family is not nearly as pleasant as formerly. Mrs. Carson, Col. and Mrs. Bradforte came. We have not seen the Bradfortes until today since our memorial trip out to the Indian settlement. Col. Bradforte is still harping on "my pet dear." He is on the wrong trail.

A letter from Sarah Wadley telling of the Yankee outrages about Bastrop [La.]. Jimmy has not written in a long time. Dr. Weir, I am thankful to say, is devoting himself

to Amy Quays. Have had no one to play chess with since Lt. Neil said good-bye, and he went off four games ahead of me. I hate to tell Capt. Boone that, as he has a high opinion of my skill.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *March 30*: The little town is looking lovely now in its spring decoration of peach and apple blossoms and the circling fields of soft green wheat and rye. It seems to be peeping through a bouquet of pink and white blooms.

A rumor that Gen. Beauregard has been killed in a great fight in Carolina.¹¹

A letter from Missie Morris. They are undecided about coming to Texas.

Mrs. Bradforte was in great distress a few days ago for fear the liquor men would mob Col. Bradforte as they were much infuriated at some of his orders, but it has all blown over.

We have been renovating our last summer's clothes. We have not a single new thing to make up. If Mr. Smith does not soon send that cotton which must go on to San Antonio, I do not know what we will all do for clothes. Mamma is much interested in Miss Braddon's novels.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *April 1*: A wild March wind is howling around the house, scattering the glory of the white and pink blossoms that have made the town so lovely for the last week. The white and purple lilacs yesterday were in full bloom, great plumes, redolent of perfume, but today the rude norther has drifted the fragrant petals far and wide. On the mantle is our first spring bouquet, wreathes of flowering almond, tufts of brilliant phlox, a handful of the coral honeysuckle loved by the boys, gold and purple pansies, as large as those in Louisiana, and sweetest of all, the cluster of purple and white lilac. Lilacs grow so much better in this red soil than in the swamp.

Though the buds and flowers of fair spring are with us, we are feeling the truth of the poet's song, "What is friendship but a name?" Our refugee friends, Mrs. Carson and

¹¹ A false rumor.

Mrs. Savage, have grown cold toward us, and we do not know what is wrong. It worries Mamma very much. Though we may pretend not to feel the wound, it is no less painful. As to Mrs. Carson, Mamma long ago realized that she had no conception of real friendship. Her nature is too shallow to be true to anyone. The last friend is always the best with her. But Mamma had a right to look for real friendship at Mrs. Savage's hands, but she has not secured it. Her friendship is as worthless as Mrs. Carson's sham article. She showed plainly in the affair of the house that Mamma's interest was as nothing to her compared to Mrs. Alexander's, a friend of a few months. Mamma is disturbed by it, for she considered Mrs. Savage one of her very best friends.

Mrs. Alexander sent to ask Mamma to let her keep the house, but that would deprive us entirely of a home as Mamma had given up the one we are in and planted a garden at the Alexander house. It was impossible and we will move in May. We will be glad to move to the Brazos¹² this fall and put the past and its false friends behind us.

A long letter from Mrs. Bruce. They are eager to get out, but the roads are still too bad to venture. I hope we shall find them more pleasant than our other friends now are. Mrs. Bruce is much worried over the first payment on their house, which falls due tomorrow.

Beauregard is all right. We hear that Gen. Sherman is dead.

Capt. Smith of the staff, redolent of whiskey and perfume, called to bid us adieu as he is off to the army again.

Johnny is in a dreadful humor and makes us all feel it because Mamma will not allow him to have another fight with Charley Ligruski. Boys of Johnny's age are generally self-willed and disobedient. Mamma can do but little with him, and now he is of no assistance to her. Everything seems to be going wrong, most probably because I myself am out of time, and so no more scribbling until I am myself again.

¹² Evidently at this time Mrs. Stone proposed to rent a cotton plantation in the Brazos River Valley, where planting was carried on in the extensive manner of the eastern cotton states.

Will copy a fugitive poem I like so much, "The Two Villages."

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *April 6*: Have nothing new to read. Have been looking over an old volume of *Pierson's Magazine*. What trashy stories they are, all with the same happy ending. We are expecting half of the *beau monde* at rehearsal this afternoon. We have another grand entertainment in course of rehearsal. Mamma is the presiding genius, and I am humble adviser as I will not take a part, though they kindly beg me to do so. We enjoy the rehearsals greatly. All the officers and the girls are deeply interested, and they generally meet here at the house. No one else will offer a room. There are to be four charades—Miss Neta Irvine, Mollie Moore, Lt. Holmes, Lt. Martin, dramatic manager, Julia Boren, Mattie Butler, Lt. Holmes, Lt. Alexander, Martin Price, Florence Smith, Mollie Sandford, Lt. Dupre, wayworn, Sally Grissman, Janie Roberts. Mollie Sandford is the best actress and Lt. Holmes and Lt. Martin the best actors. The prettiest tableaux are "The Game of Life," "The White Lady of Avenel," and "The Feast of Roses." Lt. Holmes as the rejected lover is inimitable.¹⁸

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *April 7*: All the pleasure seekers were here this morning and we had a merry time. They will be here again tomorrow night. I stood up so long yesterday afternoon from three to seven walking, talking, and laughing at the performers that, when they left, I was so spent I had to go to bed. Sally Grissman and Mr. Moore are enough to ruin any charade. They have not much mastery or ideas of acting. Dr. Weir has smoked the pipe of peace and attends all the meetings. We cannot tell whether or not he and Amy Quays will make a match. She is so ugly and simple, but wealthy. We spent a pleasant Tuesday with Mrs. Lawrence. Mrs. Wells is just back from

¹⁸ An interesting commentary on the status of Kate's affections at this time. She lists Lt. Holmes twice—without reason. His role as "the rejected lover" was doubtless more than mere play-acting.

a long visit to her husband, and so we had more topics in common than usual. They are kind, good people but a trifle "heavy on hand." Paid calls on Mrs. Savage, Mrs. Prentice, Mrs. Bradforte, and Mrs. Tooke, a new arrival from Arkansas, Gen. Buckner's sister. Mrs. Carson is much absorbed by her, a plain little lady.

Mamma distressed me much yesterday by telling me I was the most reserved person she ever knew, that she did not feel that she knew me at all. It was like a blow on my heart for her to speak so. I never knew I was reserved. I never try to be. All that I can do is to endeavor to overcome this fault and to let her see that she knows all there is of me to know. The silly, light love affairs seemed too foolish to talk about, but I will try to be frank with my darling Mother. I wish I could be more like her, more like she would have me, but I fear we cannot change our nature. Another impressive thing is she says that I am generally considered a very handsome, stylish-looking girl, but I know she is mistaken there. Motherly partiality has blinded her. I always considered myself rather remarkably ugly.

All the girls attended a party a few days ago and their escorts drank so much several were unable to accompany the girls home. All the men present but two were said to be drunk. I am thankful I did not go to such a disgraceful affair. The girls are much chagrined and offended.

Capt. Polys, who lives with his wife just at the foot of the hill from us, sent us some lovely flowers, the finest clusters of lilacs we ever saw.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *April 16*: All walked to church and were well repaid by an excellent sermon from Mr. Moore. Rested until Capt. Buck came for his regular Sunday afternoon visit. The tableaux with all their pleasant chat and laughter are a thing of the past. The gay rehearsals and frequent meetings are over, and we cleared about \$900. The weather was wretched both evenings and of course kept many away, but we feel repaid for the trouble. The tableaux went off beautifully, not a hitch. Lt. Holmes, the Prince Charming as Mollie Moore and I dubbed him, was invaluable.

able. He would do anything or adopt any suggestion we made. He was in attendance on Mollie and me all the time.

Dr. Weir came up to say good-bye as he is off for good. He might have brought me a pretty bouquet to remember him by. Dr. McGregor got back just in time to take part in the entertainment. His part he made as ridiculous and amusing as possible by his absurd blunders. Dr. Boone has been here for two or three days and is off and away again. He paid us several visits but not specially enjoyable ones. He was much pleased with Mollie Moore, whom he met for the first time. I tell Miss Mollie she always gets ahead of me when she tries the "poetry dodge" on our mutual friends. She is a charming girl. It is such a pleasure to have a friend to chatter nonsense to who enjoys it as much as I and does her full share. Capt. Emphy, the Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance, is again in town and looks more fascinating than ever. He has not done himself the honor of calling yet.

The troupe wish to get up a tragedy for next Friday night. But neither Mamma nor Mrs. Gary will engineer it, and so it is impossible.

We are disappointed in Capt. Johnson. He behaves like a child. We all go out tomorrow to call on Mrs. Carouth and Mrs. Tooke and spend the day with Mrs. Savage. Spending the day is my perfect aversion. Whoever started the trying fashion of spending the day? It is too much of a good thing.

This is certainly not a reading community. We have met only two or three persons who are acquainted with "The White Lady of Avenel." I think the general opinion is that she was a Louisiana refugee, a neighbor of ours.¹⁴

Johnny is over his passion of a week and is begging me to come out for a walk with him. Johnny is a shy admirer of Lizzie Irvine, a girl about twenty-two. She is quite pretty, one of four or five sisters living near.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] *April 23*: Such terrible news if true, but we cannot believe it. We know that we have met with fearful reverses this year. All our coast cities

¹⁴ The "White Lady" was a spirit mysteriously connected with the Avenel family in Sir Walter Scott's *The Monastery*.

are conquered: gallant old Charleston has fallen, Wilmington and Mobile have passed out of our hands, and Richmond, "brave Richmond on the James," has been taken. But all that is nothing compared to the awful report from the Yankee papers that Gen. Lee, our strong arm of defense, has capitulated with 40,000 men without firing a gun, that most of our best generals were taken at the same time, and that what remains of that noble army is only a disorganized mob of despairing men. All this is too dreadful to believe. God spare us from this crushing blow and save our dying country! ¹⁵

All refuse to believe such disaster, and the home life flows on as usual. Two dramatic performances by the natives, the amiable Capt. Johnson saying he did not wish the refugees even to attend. Mrs. Gary is vice-president, and I am secretary of the society. The gentlemen come in the evening and the ladies call in the day, but over every pleasure sweeps the shadow of the evil news. It may be true. It may be true. Mollie Moore, Lt. Holmes, and I rode out to the armory to see the soldiers drill. Met Col. and Mrs. Hill, all sympathizing with Capt. Polys, who fell down while pulling the bell rope and broke his leg in two places.

Just finished three embroidered cravats for Johnny. Friday Mamma and I finished a beautiful fawn-colored barège trimmed with black lace. It looks real stylish. My old white dress has been dyed by Lucy. She has become quite an adept at dyeing things.

The rain came down in torrents Thursday but in the afternoon ceased and I rode up to school for Sister. Came through boggy roads and rushing streams at sundown. Found Lt. Holmes waiting to go with me to Mrs. Carson's to tea, to stay there until 8:30, and then to drive over to Dr. Moore's, Mollie's father's, to attend a private rehearsal. We had a pleasant time there until twelve, then the drive home, adieux to Lt. Holmes, and then the blessed oblivion of sleep. Went up to return Eliza Roberts' call late in the afternoon.

¹⁵ General Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House, Va., April 9, 1865.

Lt. Holmes caught up with me and came home and spent the evening. Busy sewing Tuesday until Lt. Holmes was announced, then had to spend the balance of the day amusing him. After he bowed himself away, I went over to see Mollie Moore and chatter nonsense.

Mrs. Lily is more disagreeable than formerly, which is saying much. She is so abrupt.

Had delicious white cake at Mrs. Lawrence's. All the members of the troupe wanted Mamma for president of the society, but she would not hear of it. Mrs. Swain, a perfect incapable, was called to the chair. Capt. Buck has brought me a book nicely commenced for my *official* records, and Lt. Holmes is to see they are kept according to rule.¹⁶ Must send it around for members to sign.

Mamma has been much disturbed on the subject of details for Mr. Smith, but Lt. Dupre arranged the detail as he passed through Marshall. She hopes to have no further trouble on that score.

Am reading Goethe's *Faust* and am disappointed as I do not much enjoy it. Of course, it loses greatly in translation.

We will miss Lt. Dupre now that he is ordered away, but there is always someone to take the absentee's place.

["Bonnie Castle," Tyler, Tex.] April 28: Just finished a letter to Sarah Wadley, writing with homemade ink, the best we have had for many a day.¹⁷ We also have homemade blacking, just as shiny as the old bought blacking.¹⁸ Truly we are learning many things. Seven letters to answer, one from that trial, Dr. Weir, and an aggrieved one from Capt. Wylie. I told him not to write. Dr. Weir is stationed now at Henderson. Dr. Kunckers [?], a new acquaintance and a

¹⁶ The "official" records were those of the local drama club. Perhaps Lt. Holmes and other intimate friends knew that Kate kept an "unofficial" diary.

¹⁷ "Confederate ink" was made from many substitutes—the bark of magnolia, dogwood, red or white oak, the rind of pomegranate, elderberries, and green persimmons.—Massey, *Ersatz in the Confederacy*, 146–47.

¹⁸ A favorite shoe blacking substitute was a mixture of soot or lamp-black and molasses, eggwhites, and vinegar, with oils and sometimes whiskey added.—*Ibid.*, 85.

vigorous bore, walked back from the post office with Johnny and me and spent the evening. I am thankful he is ordered away in the morning. It is a strange and lamentable fact that all the bald, middle-aged bachelor doctors take a fancy to me, for I always had a distaste for doctors and specially detest that style.

We hear that Lincoln is dead.¹⁹ There can be no doubt, I suppose, that he has been killed by J. W. Booth. "*Sic semper tyrannis*," as his brave destroyer shouted as he sprang on his horse. All honor to J. Wilkes Booth, who has rid the world of a tyrant and made himself famous for generations. Surratt has also won the love and applause of all Southerners by his daring attack on Seward, whose life is trembling in the balance.²⁰ How earnestly we hope our two avengers may escape to the South where they will meet with a warm welcome. It is a terrible tragedy, but what is war but one long tragedy? What torrents of blood Lincoln has caused to flow, and how Seward has aided him in his bloody work. I cannot be sorry for their fate. They deserve it. They have reaped their just reward.

There is great gloom over the town. All think that Lee and his army have surrendered. No one will take the Confederate money today, and as there is no gold in circulation there is no medium of exchange. Rumors, rumors, but nothing definite. Lee is certainly captured. Our strong arm of victory, the chief hope of our Country, is a prisoner with an army variously estimated at from 6,000 to 43,000 men captured on their retreat from Richmond. Dr. Kunckers told us as a secret that Johnston with his entire army has surrendered, but that news is suppressed through motives of policy. Our papers say Johnston's army has been reinforced by the flower of Lee's army, that he has a band of tried veterans and will make a determined stand. We know not what to believe. All are fearfully depressed. Lee's defeat is

¹⁹ April 15, 1865.

²⁰ The attempt on the life of W. H. Seward made at the same time John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln miscarried. Lewis Powell, alias Payne, was the would-be assassin instead of John H. Surratt.—Benjamin P. Thomas, *Abraham Lincoln* (New York, 1952), 519-21.

a crushing blow hard to recover from. Maybe after a few days we can rally for another stand. Now, most seem to think it useless to struggle longer, now that we are subjugated. I say, "Never, never, though we perish in the track of their endeavor!" Words, idle words. What can poor weak women do?

I cannot bear to hear them talk of defeat. It seems a reproach to our gallant dead. If nothing else can force us to battle on for freedom, the thousands of grass-grown mounds heaped on mountainside and in every valley of our country should teach us to emulate the heroes who lie beneath and make us clasp closer to our hearts the determination to be free or die. "When the South is trampled from the earth—Her women can die and be free." I say with my whole soul:

*Shame to the traitor-heart that springs
To the faint, soft arms of Peace,
Though the Roman eagle shook his wings
At the very gates of Greece.*

Monday it was distressing to see the gloom on every face. We had an impromptu dining that day, and all seemed in the depths of despair, could think and talk of nothing but defeat and disaster. Mrs. Savage's family, except Anna, Dr. McGregor, Lt. Holmes, Mr. Boone, Kate's brother here on a visit, and two or three other gentlemen were our guests. The war was discussed in all its bearings. Seldom has there been a gloomier feast. Yesterday took dinner with Mrs. Prentice and returned in time to receive Mollie Sandford, Lt. Holmes, Lt. Martin, and Dr. Winn, a nice Texan and a friend of Dr. Buckner's, whom he saw about six weeks ago. We were delighted to meet him. He could tell us so much about our friends in Mississippi. He called this morning to say good-bye, now on his way back to his command, or at least next week. We will send letters by him. If My Brother and Uncle Bo are among the prisoners, it is probable they will soon be paroled and at home. But we know not what has been their fate.²¹

²¹ Captain W. R. Stone, Acting Assistant Adjutant General of N. H.

When Johnny first heard the ill news, he was wild with excitement and insisted on joining the army at once. We were wretched about him, but today he has quieted down and is willing to await further developments.

We expected to move to our new house on Monday, and Mamma is worried about paying the rent. If the Negroes are freed, we will have no income whatever, and what will we do? As things have turned out, we wish we could stay here until we know what is to be our fate.

[“Bonnie Castle,” Tyler, Tex.] *April 30*: We went out last night to serenade Capt. Polys. The poor fellow will be in bed, although the lovely spring days are so fair that they make one love life in spite of trouble. The girls, Mollie Moore and three of the Irvines, came over to give us a serenade, and as it was too early to be in bed they came up to the gallery for a chat and to hear Lt. Dupre tell the news. We all joined and walked up through the fresh, perfumed spring evening and bright moonlight to comfort Capt. Polys with songs and sympathy. He and his wife are most appreciative of any attention.

Lt. Dupre came back yesterday but without his wife who is still in the Federal lines after preparing for months to get out. She was on the boat with her baggage and children when she was ordered back home because the names of the little girls were not in the passport. It is a sore disappointment to the Lieutenant. He has been separated from them so long. But with the elastic Creole temperament, he is as gay as ever. He says he was homesick at Shreveport and was glad to see Tyler again. He brings more encouraging news. Gen. Johnston is at Augusta, Ga., at the head of 125,000 of the best troops in the world, the veterans of the Confederacy, and will make a gallant fight.²² The Arkansas, Louisiana, and Missouri troops are passing resolutions declaring they

Harris' brigade, was paroled April 9, 1865, along with other men of General Lee's Army of Northern Virginia and was permitted to retain his side arms and his horse.—“Paroles of the Army of Northern Virginia,” *Southern Historical Society Papers*, XV (January-December, 1887), 326.

²² General Johnston had surrendered April 26, 1865.

will never give up this side of the river and are ready to enlist for ninety-nine years.²³ And Lee surrendered only 6,000 fighting men. I hope My Brother was one of the band. Capt. Birchett sends us word Col. Tom Manlove was killed in the fight at Hatcher's Inn, but we think that is a mistake. We have heard of them all since then.

Mrs. Wells and Lt. Holmes spent the day, but he has been here every day for a week. Mollie Moore, the Irvine girls, and I are much interested in the subject of cravats. They wish to make half a dozen for their different "heart's delights," and they come over and get Mamma and me to do the embroidery for them. I have just finished a very chaste and elegant affair for Lt. Holmes, payment of a gambling debt, and I am making one for Mollie Sandford to give to her best soldier, a small red-headed warrior. Lt. Holmes showed me this evening a letter from his mother in Maryland. It came out on a flag-of-truce boat, his first letter from her in three years. He also showed me a letter from "the little widow." I am sorry Lt. Holmes is such a dissipated man. He is gay and pleasant and a gentleman. Why will he drink? He says he intends giving it up forever.

[*"The Rest," Tyler, Tex.*] *May 7:* We have been established in our pleasant new home for a week and find it delightful. We have all in order now and can enjoy it. The servants are efficient movers by now, and we had little trouble. A showery Sunday, and so we could not keep our engagement to go to church to hear the new minister. We lounged and gossiped all the morning. We are still puzzled over the distant behavior of Mrs. Savage and Mrs. Carson. Mrs. Savage seems in a dreadful bad humor and scolds some

²³ The most dramatic resistance to surrender in the Trans-Mississippi Department was that of General Jo Shelby, commander of the Missouri Cavalry division. From Pittsburg, Tex., the division started to Shreveport, the headquarters, where Shelby hoped to have General Smith deposed and replaced with a general who would never surrender. Upon learning of the mass surrender at Shreveport, Shelby stopped his troops at Corsicana, Tex., and put into effect a plan he had long had for such an emergency—escape to Mexico with an organization made up of all officers and men who refused to surrender.—Daniel O'Flaherty, *General Jo Shelby, Undefeated Rebel* (Chapel Hill, 1954), 226-34.

of us whenever we meet. The last time she dined with us, she gave Johnny such a lecture I think it will be long before he dares visit her house again, but she is thawing and slowly forgiving us for our sins, whatever they may be. But Mrs. Carson still wears the stately front of offended dignity. We see only Katie now. Eddie is also offended with Johnny. How lightly the close friendship of several years has been broken up, and I know Mrs. Savage has done it. Mrs. Carson is looking for a large box of clothes from the river. Our silver will be in the box, and Mrs. Carson is not at all pleased at the idea. But how more than foolish to write of these trivial quarrels when affairs of such moment should be engaging all our thoughts.

Johnny went to the prairie on Friday. He did not like the idea of the trip, but Mamma thought it best for him to go. He should be learning to help about the business, and then it will get him away from this region of excitement. He will not be kept wrought up by constant stirring reports, and perhaps when he returns he will be willing to settle for awhile to quiet study. Jessy came down from the place. Hoccus is dead. Everything else is progressing satisfactorily.

There is Capt. Buck's rap, his regular Sunday afternoon visit. Mamma and he are quite friends. He tells her all his family troubles. Mrs. Hill is his daughter.

[“The Rest,” Tyler, Tex.] *May 9*: Mamma is off with Capt. Buck to visit Mrs. Tooke. Several letters, one from Jimmy to Johnny describing his last visit to the river. One from Jimmy Carson and one from Missie Morris. The girls are having a lovely time in Homer with so many soldiers camped near. Most of them are Missourians. The tallest, handsomest men in the army come from Missouri. A regiment from that state is a splendid-looking body of men. But I do not believe those girls are having any nicer time than we are enjoying here in quiet little Tyler. Missie says there were no engagements and no marriages from the winter's campaign.

How comfortably our move was accomplished. Mamma gave general orders to the Corps d'Afrique to move all our

"duds" to the new house. We have only the bare necessities except servants. They are plentiful. Then Mamma seated herself to the perusal of Burns, Kate went to sewing, I went off calling, returned to dinner, and then went out again. Late in the afternoon Johnny and I went over to our new home to receive Mr. Moore, who had an engagement to call to say good-bye as his furlough is out. Found everything in quite good order and not looking nearly as bare as we imagined it would. Said good-bye to Mr. Moore an hour, and then read until time for a walk, when Johnny went off to escort his bright particular star, Miss Lizzie Irvine. I went up to meet Mamma and welcome her to her new home, which we have named "The Rest" and which we intend to enjoy to the fullest until stern Fate again casts us out on the world. Lt. Holmes came to tea, though we had explained to him we would not be ready for visitors before Tuesday. He said he forgot our warning. He has a settled habit of coming every day. I suppose he could not break himself of it.

Lt. Holmes and I went over to Mrs. Savage's to tea the other day taking Sister with us. Found everybody there utterly whipped, "routed horse, foot, and dragoons." Spent rather an uncomfortable evening. Mrs. Savage and Mrs. Carson amuse themselves spreading the news of my engagement to Lt. Holmes. But I cannot really blame them. When two people are as much together, such reports will arise, and it does no good to tell them, as we do, that there is no engagement. Have not an idea of marrying him or anyone else. We are friends, nothing more. Such reports die out after a time and meanwhile we see much pleasure and amusement together. Mrs. Savage, from being the hottest Rebel, is now "resigned, submissive, weak," and Mrs. Lily is an open and aggressive loyalist and most disagreeable. We were glad to get back and find Mamma and Lt. Dupre having a pleasant chat. Mrs. Tooke called in the morning accompanied by a new young man called Hardin, a rollicking fellow from Arkansas, an incessant talker. Mrs. Tooke invited us to go the following afternoon and call on a young lady visiting her, but on the evening in question first came Mollie Moore,

Lizzie Irvine, and Mrs. Carson, and as they left Col. and Mrs. Bradforte and their train came to take tea, and then Dr. and Mrs. Walker. They had heard all kinds of discouraging reports, and they talked till we were all nearly desperate. In the morning we were wretched. Affairs seemed hopeless when Mrs. Savage and Mrs. Lily arrived harrowing us to the last pitch of endurance by their "I told you so" manner and their "I knew it all the time." Their covert abuse of our leaders and excuses for the Yankees were most exasperating. Mrs. Lily is a trial to me. I hope we will not see any of them again until things are settled and we know what to believe.

They left a few minutes before sunset. I hurried off in the carriage to keep the appointment with the girls. The sun was down when we left town, and when we drove up to Mrs. Tooke's door we saw them sitting at supper in the hall. They have only two rooms. But we made the best of it. Went in and chatted for a few minutes, refusing supper, I know to Mrs. Tooke's relief. Then home through the soft moonlight, we girls not at all afraid, though it was after eight when we reached home. We found Lt. Dupre and Lt. Holmes spending the evening and made an apology for our late arrival. We went to see Mrs. Gary, who looks very comfortable, and stopped to see Capt. Polys, who is improving.

Lucy is sick but Adeline fills her place acceptably. We have have an excellent garden, though our neighbors said Warren was not doing a thing right in it.²⁴ We can send salad to the hospital every day and soon other vegetables.

We find ourselves so comfortable that we are frightened. We fear it cannot last—a pretty six-room house, nicely improved grounds and surroundings with the flowers in full bloom. We are thankful to be at rest once more. I am busy embroidering a black velvet tobacco bag with scarlet fuchsias for Lt. Holmes.

[“The Rest,” Tyler, Tex.] *May 15: Conquered, Submission, Subjugation* are words that burn into my heart, and

²⁴ Quite likely Warren was planting his vegetables on beds, as was the custom in the wet soil of northeast Louisiana, instead of down in a row.

yet I feel that we are doomed to know them in all their bitterness. The war is rushing rapidly to a disastrous close.²⁵ Another month and our Confederacy will be a Nation no longer, but we will be slaves, yes slaves, of the Yankee Government.

The degradation seems more than we can bear. How can we bend our necks to the tyrants' yoke? Our glorious struggle of the last four years, our hardships, our sacrifices, and worst of all, the torrents of noble blood that have been shed for our loved Country—all, all in vain. The best and bravest of the South sacrificed—and for nothing. Yes, worse than nothing. Only to rivet more firmly the chains that bind us. The bitterness of death is in the thought. We could bear the loss of my brave little brothers when we thought that they had fallen at the post of duty defending their Country, but now to know that those glad, bright spirits suffered and toiled in vain, that the end is overwhelming defeat, the thought is unendurable. And we may never be allowed to raise a monument where their graves sadden the hillside. There is a gloom over all like the shadow of Death. We have given up hope for our beloved Country and all are humiliated, crushed to the earth. A past of grief and hardship, a present of darkness and despair, and a future without hope. Truly our punishment is greater than we can bear.

Since Johnston's surrender the people in this department are hopeless. If we make a stand, it would only delay the inevitable with the loss of many valuable lives. The leaders say the country is too much disheartened to withstand the power of a victorious Yankee army flushed with victory. Still, many hope there will be a rally and one more desperate

²⁵ The situation throughout the Trans-Mississippi Department was chaotic: General John Pope, commander of the Federal Military Division of Missouri, wrote General Kirby Smith at Shreveport requesting him to surrender, but Smith delayed. On April 21 an order was read to soldiers on dress parade in Shreveport telling them of Lee's surrender but asking them to retain hope. They were told that they were the hope of the Confederacy and that their supplies were inexhaustible. At a mass meeting the same day, speakers urged resistance to surrender as did officers in command of troops. Similar meetings occurred elsewhere in the department—Blossington, *Walker's Texas Division*, 306-307; Thomas, *Arkansas in War and Reconstruction*, 305-14.

struggle for freedom. If we cannot gain independence, we might compel better terms.

By the twenty-fourth we will know our fate—Submission to the Union (how we hate the word!), Confiscation, and Negro equality—or a bloody unequal struggle to last we know not how long. God help us, for vain is the help of man.

We hope President Davis is really making his way to this department, as we hear.²⁶ His presence would give new life to the people. Poor Booth, to think that he fell at last.²⁷ Many a true heart at the South weeps for his death. Caesar had his Brutus, Murat his Charlotte Corday, and Lincoln his Booth. Lincoln's fate overtook him in the flush of his triumph on the pinnacle of his fame, or rather infamy. We are glad he is not alive to rejoice in our humiliation and insult us by his jokes. The circumstance of his death forms a most complete tragedy. Many think Andy Johnson worse than Lincoln, but that is simply impossible. Added to our grief at the public calamity is our great anxiety about My Brother. He has had time to get here, if he was paroled, and we have not had a word from him. In the four-day fight before we gave up Petersburg, our army lost fifteen thousand men, and we tremble to think he may be among them. We hear that Tom Manlove is certainly dead, captured and died of his wounds.

Mamma is sewing with a heavy heart on a jacket for Lt. Holmes. Last week we made a heavy white suit for Lt. Dupre. It was an undertaking. A letter from Mrs. Amis to Mamma. She writes most despondently. Sunday Lt. Dupre, Lt. Holmes, Capt. Buck, Col. and Mrs. Bradforte, and Capt. Birchett all came up to discuss the gloomy outlook. We all meet now just to condole with each other. A more doleful crowd I never saw. Capt. Birchett says he is going to South America rather than live under Yankee rule. His father was president of an indignation meeting held in Vicksburg to pass resolutions of sympathy and regret on the death of Lincoln. Capt. Birchett is too disgusted for expression.

²⁶ President Davis was captured May 10, 1865, near Irwinsville, Ga.

²⁷ Booth fled from Washington after shooting President Lincoln but was killed in Virginia, April 26, 1865.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *May 17*: Just a succession of callers and calls. Everybody too restless and wretched to stay at home. Must talk it over with somebody. Such a constant succession of people is very tiring. Went about ten miles over the roughest roads to a fish fry at a tiny creek where I doubt there ever was a fish. A gay day, but quite exhausted at late bedtime when the last gentlemen left. Mamma was wise not to go.

We have finished Lt. Holmes' grey suit, and it was a job. I hope no other soldier of our acquaintance is in need of clothes. Such sewing palls on one. Mamma is most energetic about it.

Mollie Moore and Lt. Holmes were with us until nine tonight, and then Dr. McGregor, Maj. Squires, Lt. Dupre, and Capt. Giday came and stayed until eleven. These two new men belong to a Louisiana battery of artillery and camped here only one night on their way to the Brazos for forage. Both are Creoles and entertaining. Lt. Holmes, Sister, and I had a pleasant visit to Mrs. Levy.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *May 20*: Still on the rack of uncertainty as regards our future. Flying rumors of the most exciting character keep us in a fever of apprehension. We do not know whether armed resistance is over or whether we are to fight on to the bitter end. If the news of the way in which the people of the Trans-Mississippi Department are ground to the earth is true, it would be better for us to resist as long as there is a man left to load a gun. Gloom and despondency cloud every face. Mrs. Savage's are the only people that rejoice and are glad that "this cruel war is over." Better years of battle than a peace like this is the cry of all we see. Our latest news is that people in this department have an armistice of thirty days to resign themselves to the inevitable. I suppose it is a breathing space to collect our scattered energies and brace ourselves for the stern trials of the future.²⁸

²⁸ On May 4 General Taylor surrendered at Mobile, and on May 8, Colonel J. T. Sprague, emissary of General Pope, arrived in Shreveport to receive General Smith's answer to the proposed surrender. Smith

And Nature smiles down on all this wretchedness. The loveliest of May mornings and the air is sweet with the perfume of the star jasmine. Our summer house in the yard is covered with it, and it is now white with blooms. The finest variety we ever saw. This soil suits it better than ours. That arbour is a favorite retreat, and we spend many gay, dolorous, and charming hours in its shade.

Sister is off to school, Sunday school, and we are all ready for church. It behooves us to ask aid from Our Maker when all else is failing us.

Capt. Birchett bade us a long, long adieu Wednesday morning, perhaps his last. He promised Mamma to use every effort at Shreveport to get news of My Brother and Uncle Bo. Mollie Moore spent yesterday with us. All busy sewing on two suits of soldier clothes. We were all unanimous on the subject of sending Mrs. Wells a pair of pants to make, and our description of the destitute state of the poor Confed was so moving that she sent them back the same evening beautifully made. We took a well-earned siesta and were roused by Capt. Buck, Mr. Donnelly, and several other visitors. Walked over after sundown to tell Mrs. Bradforte good-bye. She is a splendid woman, elegant and stylish, and so entertaining. Her husband, Col. Bradforte, is an old West Pointer. We will miss them greatly. She can entertain in a tent better than most people in a drawing room. From Virginia.

Friday I was busy embroidering cravats for Mollie Moore and Neta Irvine. Drove over in the afternoon to consult them, and on my return Mamma, Mrs. Bradforte, and Mrs. Lawrence took the carriage and went over to call on the latter. I was left to entertain Dr. McGregor and later Mrs.

refused, at first. He called a conference of the governors of Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas at Marshall, Tex., to consider terms. The governors decided in favor of surrender. At the same time in Marshall, Generals Jo Shelby, S. B. Buckner, William B. Preston, and John G. Walker met and elected General Buckner to succeed General Kirby Smith. Soon thereafter General Buckner left for New Orleans, where he signed surrender terms which were approved by General Kirby Smith on June 2, 1865.—Thomas, *Arkansas in War and Reconstruction*, 308-15; O'Flaherty, *General Jo Shelby*, 228-31.

Ligruski. Later Lt. Holmes came and stayed until eleven thirty. He gave me his full views on matrimony. They do not entirely agree with mine.

All the days are filled with people coming and going. The same set happens in nearly every day. A crowd of us was in the jasmine arbour yesterday evening when Mamma came back from calling regaling ourselves on Confederate cakes and fine water. Lt. Holmes and I took the carriage and called on Mrs. Prentice. She was not at home, but the drive up hill and down dale was delightful. Lt. Dupre hailed us coming back, and we took him up and all stayed till bedtime. Nobody wants to be alone. All must see their fellow sufferers and compare notes. Mrs. Carson sends us word every day or so to expect her and her brother, Capt. Waller, and we did for a time. Now we know hers are but idle words. Capt. Birchett is back again and roused us at three the other afternoon to amuse him. Played chess until Mollie Moore came and then Lt. Holmes and we adjourned to the yard and had a merry battle with roses. The great bushes are masses of pink and white and the jasmine perfumes the air of the house and yard. It will always be connected in my mind with pleasant episodes of this grievous spring. We went through a pelting shower to spend an hour with Mrs. Levy. Then made a few minute's call on Mrs. Savage and were shocked and repelled by their rejoicing and delight at the close of the war.

[“The Rest,” Tyler, Tex.] *May 21*: We are expecting Johnny back from the prairie and we look for My Brother, Uncle Bo, and Jimmy every hour. No news from them yet. Uncle John's little children are great pets with us. Kate keeps them so nice, though it has been a job to keep white dresses for them. Material is so difficult to get. Kate is sweet about letting us do as we please with the little children. Sally idolizes Johnny and will spend hours playing quietly in his room while he studies. She tags around after him all the time, and he is very fond of her. She is a pretty thing and Elise will be too when a little older. Uncle John worked in the Commissary office for a long time. As he has seemed to

have consumption for years, he could not join the army. He is our only male relative not in the ranks. He will get a school. He should be a good teacher.

Coming in yesterday evening from the gallery after Lt. Holmes left, Mamma told me that she wished I would send Lt. Holmes off, that she much preferred my marrying Joe to Lt. Holmes, though neither was a suitable match, as Joe is too young and Lt. Holmes too dissipated. I was surprised. I did not know she was taking it seriously, and I could honestly assure her I had not an idea of marrying either of them.²⁹ I could have told her the same of Dr. McGregor, Lt. Valentine, and the conceited Capt. Birchett, should he ever make up his mind to propose. She seemed much relieved. I thought she understood the point of view of most of the girls. One must not distress a soldier by saying *No* when he is on furlough. They have enough to bear. They may be going back to sudden death. Then they will most probably forget you for a sweetheart at the next camp, or their love will grow cool by the time you meet again. So it is just a piece of amusement on both sides. If Mrs. Carson and Mrs. Savage only knew that I am as determined not to marry Joe as they are determined to prevent it, how much trouble and maneuvering it would save them. But I cannot well explain it to them. Joe can when he gets home, and their minds will be at rest.

Lt. Holmes has stopped drinking for some weeks now, since I asked him to do so one day during rehearsals when I saw he was going too far. He was very nice about it. His face flushed and he thanked me but did not get angry as I feared.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *May 27*: Anarchy and confusion reign over all. Jayhawking is the order of the day. The soldiers are disbanding throughout the Department and seizing Government property wherever they can find it. The

²⁹ Mrs. Stone was perhaps testing Kate to discern her feelings for Lt. Holmes. After all, Kate was twenty-four years old and getting dangerously near to being an old maid—especially when compared to the dauntless Amanda, who had married at sixteen after rejecting ten proposals!

Government offices here have been sacked. All work is over and all who can are going home. At Shreveport the demoralization is worse even than here. The officers are scattering to the four winds, and Jayhawkers and private soldiers are stopping and robbing them whenever found. Col. Bradforte was the first here to desert his post. We hear that the mules were taken from his ambulance and wagon. Maj. Rhett, Gen. Hayes, and indeed everyone we hear of has suffered the same fate while fleeing to the interior of the state or to Mexico. Gen. Kirby Smith has also been robbed. We do not know but suppose this Department has surrendered as the soldiers have disbanded and are making their way home. We are still in ignorance of what disposal is to be made of us by our conquerors. The excitement in the town is so great we can think and live only in the present. Everything is in a turmoil. "To the victor belongs the spoils," but he will not get his dues in this Department. We are all glad to see the soldiers divide what Government property they can find, if they will only stop there and not let the desperadoes rob the citizens as they may do. Some of the people deserve robbing, for they joined with the soldiers in sacking the Departments.

Jimmy came home Thursday no longer a soldier but a poor discouraged boy. All his regiment went home but twenty and the colonel disbanded them. Jimmy and the three Carson boys were of the twenty who stood to their guns. Will Carson came back with him. Jimmy and Joe Carson went out to the river to see the prospect there. We are so glad to have Jimmy safe at home, but oh, what a different homecoming from what we anticipated when he enlisted. No feasting. No rejoicing. Only sadness and tears. Johnny starts for Brokenburn tomorrow to get Uncle Bob to plant some corn if possible so that there will be something when we move back in the fall. Of course we cannot go now and leave the crop on the prairie. It is our only hope for a cent of money. Johnny will also go on to Vicksburg and try to get news of My Brother and Uncle Bo. The long suspense is very trying and Mamma longs so for My Brother to get

back to help her. She feels so at sea in these new conditions of life. It seems strange that we can journey now where we please, "The world before us where to choose," if only we had the money. Jimmy goes to the prairie in a few days to see what money can be raised there. I took him yesterday to see half of the girls in town. Determined to lose no time, he and Johnny are escorting two of them to church this morning. Jimmy got back nearly out of clothes of course, and Johnny, after his last trip, is nearly as badly off, having swapped off about every respectable article he had. We had to go to work at once. Fortunately Mamma has secured some blue linen from the department stores and had plenty of homespun. Shirts are the most difficult to get.

Mamma keeps us in terror threatening to move to the farm until fall. It is about like being in jail with the privilege of looking through the window, but she can decide nothing until she sees or hears from My Brother.

Lt. Holmes' mess is broken up and he is staying with us until he and Lt. Dupre can get off together. Traveling is so unsafe just now for officers. But Lt. Dupre is so anxious to get back to his wife, they will leave in a day or so. Their part of the spoils in lieu of pay is an ambulance and pair of mules with which they will journey to Monroe together. The officials have burned all their papers. Ben Clarkson stopped for two days on his way home. He is the nicest sort of young fellow. The usual company, Dr. Meagher has returned and his wife is happy.

There is Capt. Birchett for about his last Sunday afternoon visit.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *May 31*: How quiet and deserted the house is since they all left. Johnny and Jimmy started Monday for Louisiana to be absent five or six weeks. Yesterday Lt. Dupre and Lt. Holmes—plain "Mr." after this—said good-bye to us. How much we miss them. I wonder will it be the same when we meet Lt. Holmes again after the five months of separation? He wishes to correspond but it is better not. The only tokens exchanged were geranium leaves. Which will be treasured longest? He has been

perfectly sober for two months and has made many good resolutions which we trust he will keep, even though we never meet again. We have seen him every day but three for three months, and we miss him dreadfully now he has gone forever.³⁰

We finished the last sewing the morning they left with the two lieutenants, Dr. McGregor, and Capt. Williams in the house and all talking at once. Lt. Holmes and I went around to bid Sally Grissman and several of the girls good-bye. I know they all could have dispensed with my calls on the occasion, but I went just the same. We have no one "on guard" now for the first time in a year. I would "set my traps" for Capt. Waller, Mrs. Carson's nephew, but he is too much like his aunt and looks like he had been raised on *blanc mange*. A most amusing note from Mollie Moore in answer to my letter of condolence on our mutual loss. Her best soldier has also torn himself away.

Our friends in the Ordinance Department gave us so many little things during the grand crash that we feel quite rich and are delighted with our extra furnishings. All the ordinance stores were distributed or rather left open to all, and we have a quantity of ammunition. It remains to be seen whether the Yankees will allow us to keep it. It is reported that President Davis has not been captured and that the Federal authorities are most monstrously kind to the soldiers.

Am tired out cutting straw to plait. It is wondrous strange to see how little money people get on with these days. Johnny and Jimmy started on their trip of 300 miles with just \$2 in specie, and we feel quite rich when Jimmy manages to make \$1.50 in gold in a day. Rather a change from \$60 a day he was bringing in when the collapse came. One thing they supplied us with is plenty of writing paper, our first liberal allowance for two years. The boys of the town keep up a constant firing with the first powder they have had for three years, and it sounds like a brisk skirmish all around the town.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *June 12*: My Brother is with

³⁰ Kate's feelings for Lt. Holmes are obvious despite the editorial "we."

us at last, safe and well, and words are powerless to tell how thankful we are. He came last Thursday evening with Jimmy and Johnny, whom he met at Homer and turned back, as he had come by home and accomplished all that they could do.

He came by way of Cincinnati and was one month reaching Vicksburg from Lynchburg. He brings the sad news of Aunt Laura's death in February. She died of grief at Beverly's loss. She never left her bed after the little darling's death. She just lost her interest in life and faded away. The doctors attending said she had no disease, only heartbreak and no desire to live, and they could not rouse her nor give her a hold on life. Hers was a sensitive, fine, high-strung soul that could not brave disaster. Dr. Buckner is in Vicksburg utterly desolate. How kind he was to My Brother, giving him a horse, clothes, and all that he needed. Dr. Buckner is well-fixed financially as his clerk, Mr. Peters, kept his drug-store going on and made a lot of money. The first time Dr. Buckner came home on furlough, some friends told him Mr. Peters was robbing him right and left. Dr. Buckner went right on to his store, caught Mr. Peters by the collar, gave him a good shaking and cursing, and told him, "If, when I come back again, I find that you have cheated me, I shall kill you." Ever since, they say, Mr. Peters has been scrupulously honest, straight as a string, and has turned over a lot of money to Dr. Buckner. Mr. Peters is a Vermonter, six feet one, and Dr. Buckner is five feet five but a fighter all over.

Aunt Laura died while at Bladen Springs, Ala., with Aunt Sarah, and Dr. Buckner was with her at the last. My Brother's parole gave permission for him and his servant with two horses and his sidearms to return home free of charge, but he arrived at Vicksburg without a thing. Wesley was forced away at the point of the bayonet when he insisted on following Marse William on the boat. Then My Brother was attacked by a mob and broke his sword over his knee and threw it in the Ohio River rather than give it up to the haughty Federal soldiers. They would not furnish transportation unless he would take the oath of allegiance, and so

he sold his horses to get money to get to Vicksburg, where he fortunately met Dr. Buckner.

Mamma is up on the prairie and does not yet know of My Brother's return. Johnny has gone for her, and we expect her on Thursday. What an immense relief it will be to her.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *June 25*: The house is very quiet now that the boys are all away again. The two weeks they were here, they kept us in a constant turmoil. Joe was here only a week. He succeeded in getting his mother off, and in her train Mrs. Savage's and Mrs. Prentice's families, just a week after he came. All have gone home. Willy and Jimmy Carson remained to help bring out the Negroes later. We saw them constantly and, as all four of the boys are wild about girls, they kept me busy introducing them around, looking over their notes, and making bouquets for them to present to anybody, just so it was a girl. Mamma did not get home from the prairie until Saturday night, and she was almost ill from distress and fatigue. But My Brother's presence was her best restorative. He went some distance on the road to meet her.

My Brother left last Wednesday for Louisiana. He was going by way of Spring Bank and only gave himself time—scant time—to reach Brokenburn by the Fourth of July, when all abandoned places will be confiscated to the Government if the owners or agents are not on them. We hated so to see him go, but the business was imperative. He will probably not return before September. We gave him quite a list of articles to bring out, if he returns in the ambulance. Now that civilization commences again, we need so many things we have done without and hardly missed in the excitement of living.

My Brother is looking well, much more cheerful and happier than when he came. The last four years has changed him little in looks. He told me all about his love for Kate. They were engaged for several years and were devoted to each other yet let a trifle part them, a caprice they both bitterly repented but too late. But I suppose it was best for him, as he does not mourn for her dead in her young beauty,

wife of another, as he would had she been his bride. But oh, my dear little friend, Kate, the suffering was hers. She suffered, suffered, and I know was glad to answer the call for rest. He says he cannot understand the fascination Eugenia exerted over him when in her presence, that he never loved her, and that he rejoiced when he heard of her marriage. But when with her, he could not resist her wiles. He thinks Mrs. Rossman and Willy Gibson are engaged and is satisfied Willy Gibson has the same feeling for Mrs. Rossman that he had for Eugenia when in her toils. It is one chapter well closed.

Jimmy and Johnny started Thursday for Lamar County on a grand beef-driving and sugar expedition. They will be absent some time. Willy and Jimmy Carson are living now out on the place and are only in occasionally.

The Yankee company are in town but keep so quiet we forget their presence. We have not seen them though they came a week ago. There was no demonstration of any kind, and the Negroes for the present are going on just as usual. No proclamation issued. Would not know there was an enemy in the Department. We all went to church today expecting to be outraged by a sight of the whole Yankee detachment but not a blue coat was in sight. There are only twenty men here, but the regiment is looked for this afternoon. Then I suppose we shall feel the heavy hand. Capt. St. Clair has completed his disgrace by being the only man in town who will entertain a Yankee and the first to take office under the new rulers. The general feeling of contempt for him is too deep for words.

We were overwhelmingly busy for some time making clothes for the boys. Now we have little to do, and I am at my old trade, plaiting straw for Mammina to make into hats. Mr. Pierson, a new acquaintance, calls quite frequently. He is from New Orleans and is winding up some business here. And we were getting to like Capt. Waller quite well when he left with Mrs. Carson. Our friends among the townspeople are very sociable. Nearly all our refugee friends have gone.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *July 2*: We all joined forces and quilted a silk comfort yesterday, and my fingers are sore from it today. Quilting is my pet aversion, though Mamma says I am a most rapid hand. I hurry up to get through a disagreeable job.

Capt. Smith is making himself very pleasant and we see him frequently. There are compensations in our lot—as one goes, another comes. We have known him from our first residence, but he has not been a regular attaché until recently. The Irvine girls brought their brother, Lt. Irvine, a handsome gentlemanly fellow but inclined to corpulency much to his distaste, to call. Capt. Smith is shorn of half of his hirsute glories, and, while he looks more civilized, it is not an improvement.

Dr. McGregor is still here and comes up to weary us with long, prosey visits. The last time, however, he was quite agreeable but left a bad farewell by praising the Yankee major. Capt. Boren honors us frequently—three times this week. He is one of our most agreeable guests. He leaves tomorrow for Shreveport. Report says he is soon to be married to Miss McIntyre of Minden [La.]. Tommie Moore, Mollie's brother, is home from the army and comes over several times a week. He is a clever boy but not brilliant like his sister, who is one of the brightest women I ever knew. Lionel Levy, Mrs. Levy's son, who has just got back from the seat of war, came up and introduced himself the other day. He is a very intelligent boy. He talks very much like his mother and nearly as well, a real city-bred boy. Mollie Moore loaned us two new books which I read aloud and found trash—*Three Times Dead*³¹ and *After Dark*.³²

My Brother should be at Brokenburn today and Uncle Bo I suppose in Vicksburg. We heard from the boys. They will not get back for two weeks.

Andy Johnson, the detested, is reported killed by Sherman. Since his amnesty proclamation, what a mockery on a name, he deserves killing.

³¹ A novel by Mary Elizabeth Braddon, published in 1864.

³² A novel by William Wilkie Collins, published in 1856.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *July 13*: Mamma started this morning on another visit to the farm on the prairie. She may not return but may send for us to join her there. A letter from Jimmy said Mr. Smith wished to leave her employ as soon as he returns from Shreveport, and of course she must go up to straighten out the accounts with him. It is a disagreeable trip for business, and she dreaded it so. We hated to have her go, but it is unavoidable. We shall miss her so. I have plenty of work on hand to keep me busy.

About all the gentlemen we know have gone. Mr. Pierson, the last, left yesterday for New Orleans. Well, Dr. McGregor is still here. Mrs. Tooke, Mrs. Levy, Mrs. Newton, and Mrs. Roane are refugees who still linger and we see them frequently. We have been riding frequently on horseback and in the carriage. Jimmy's horse, sent home on wounded furlough, is well at last, and I must try him now that the carriage and the loaned horses and owners are gone.

More katydid's are vociferating their news than I ever heard.

["The Rest, Tyler, Tex.] *July 18*:

*How tranquilly the days
Of Thalaba go by—*

Only the quiet routine of home duties. Nothing from the outside world. Oh, for letters from some who have bidden us adieu to know what is going on and how they are faring in their new life.

Mrs. St. Clair and Neta Irvine came in and I tried to be unusually polite and noncommittal to Mrs. St. Clair. She is such a dangerous woman that I am afraid of her. She will start any report, and now she is most intimate with the Yankees and more to be feared than ever. Old Gen. Smith and Mr. Moore dined with us. Mr. Moore is the most belligerent minister I ever saw and the hottest Southerner. He cannot reconcile himself to defeat. There are two Yankee cotton-buyers in town. They are very conciliating in manner, we hear, and dumb as to the war.

Mollie Moore and I took a lovely ride this afternoon en-

tirely alone but with pistols gleaming at our side. I fancy the good people of Tyler, the conservative, will be horrified if they saw them, but we will hope for the best and trust they did not spy our weapons. We took them more for a frolic than anything else, but the roads are said not to be entirely safe with so many hard cases roving around. Mollie and I were longing for a ride and good long gossip together, and all our cavaliers have left us. Mollie told me all about "Adonis" and confesses to a partial engagement, but she evidently does not expect to keep it. We decided that the girls would all have to change their war customs, stop flirting, and only engage themselves when they really meant something. The days of lightly-won and lightly-held hearts should be over.

Mr. Moore's accounts of the frolics of Willy and Jimmy Carson on their bachelor ranch worry me considerably. I am afraid they will get into serious trouble carrying on so with those country girls and will carry their flirtations too far, and they are but boys turned loose with no one out there to restrain them. Hope they will soon come in and I will talk to them. Might do some good. A man-flirt is detestable, and I do not want those boys to degenerate into that.

We are living now on the fat of the land, plenty of milk, cream, butter, and gumbo, vegetables of all kinds, melons, and chickens. I am only sorry Mamma and the boys cannot be with us to enjoy it. The outer world is still a sealed book to us. Few mails.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *July 20*: Just finished a note to Willy Carson. I fear those boys are running riot, but a little experience will teach them much. Lionel Levy is a wonderfully good talker for a boy but too worldly wise for a boy of his age. I went with him to see Sally Grissman. They, like we, are waiting until the crops are gathered.

Have been busy with my English and straw braiding. Uncle Johnny seems much harassed every evening from the confinement of teaching. He and Kate go early to their room and Sister and I are left alone. She is so much company for me. I generally rock Sally to sleep and sing all the songs I

can think of. The war songs sicken me; the sound is like touching a new wound. I cannot bear to think of it all—forget when I can. "All is Quiet Along the Potomac Tonight,"³³ the quietness of death. It is best not to waken bitter memories by familiar heartfelt songs.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] Aug. 14: Mamma is out in the backyard directing the making of a barrel of wine from the native grapes which have ripened in the greatest profusion, hanging in great purple clusters over the blackjack oaks. They are brought into town by the wagonload. Both the boys and Sister are at the writing school where they stay all day, and I, being too lazy to sew and tired of Elia's quaint essays,³⁴ must scribble for amusement.

Mollie Moore sent us over a number of newspapers with full accounts of the imprisonment of our beloved President Jefferson Davis. He pines in his captivity like a caged eagle.³⁵ Heard directly from My Brother through Hutch Bowman, who stayed with us several days on his way to Kaufman County. We may expect him about the last of the month. Mrs. Carson has been very ill. There is a great rush for the river lands. All are anxious to secure a place above overflow.

I was out in the country in company with Mrs. Tooke on a visit to a friend of hers, Mollie Colton, and missed seeing both Hutch Bowman and Al Lowry. They brought the news of Annie Amis' marriage to Will Murdock, an officer in Gen. Marmaduke's command. We had mutually agreed to wait on each other, and now I hear of her wedding only by accident. I hope she has drawn a prize in the great lottery. Nannie Dawson's death was a sad affair. Zou Morris and Lem Gustine are engaged. They have known each other always and their marriage would be most suitable.

Mrs. Tooke and I went twenty-five miles in the country to hold a consultation with Mollie Colton on the subject of

³³ Concerning the disputed authorship of this extremely popular war song, see Harwell, *Confederate Music*, 80-83.

³⁴ *Essays of Elia*, by Charles Lamb (1775-1834).

³⁵ Jefferson Davis was imprisoned at Fort Monroe, Va., soon after he was arrested and was released on bail-bond of \$100,000 on May 13, 1867.—*Battles and Leaders*, IV, 760.

her trousseau. I had never seen her but once and then for five minutes in the dusk, but she wrote and asked Mrs. Tooke to get me to select some dresses, cut them out, and say how they should be made. This was a heavy contract but of course, after being appointed head mantuamaker in this way, we had to take a deep interest in the arrangements. And Mamma and I bought and almost made an evening dress for her on Saturday. She is a nice girl and we had a pleasant visit out there.

Jimmy and Willy Carson spent a pleasant week with us lately, and we gave them much good advice on the subject of *flirting*, which I hope they will lay to heart. Jimmy is an exceedingly handsome, attractive boy. Jimmy had made a pair of gloves of soft white buckskin and got me to embroider the gauntlets for him in gay colored silks. They were really pretty if not fashionable, a word the meaning of which we have almost forgotten.

Our boys are to go out to the Ranch as soon as their school closes next week. They are so improved in their writing. Dr. McGregor is still lingering. I do not think he knows where he wants to go and is somewhat dazed. I fancy he has no home people to welcome him back. Uncle Johnny has gone to Austin on business.

These grey August days we have little to do and little company. Mollie Moore and her two brothers will be over this evening to play cards. Anna Meagher never comes to see us now. Another friendship broken without cause, but I hold Mrs. Savage responsible for it all. She stirred up all the strife, or rather ill-feeling. There has not been a cross word.

Our melon patch is exhausted but melons in town are selling for ten cents a dozen. None should go unfed at that rate. Mrs. Tooke kindly furnishes us with plenty of peaches.

Quite a number of Negroes are flocking into town, but there is no disorder. Occasionally we hear of a Negro shot down and lying unburied in the woods.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] Aug 26: None of us can muster the energy to go to hear Mr. Seaton's dry-as-dust discourse this burning August day, and so we will wear the day

away at home. We are looking for My Brother daily. Johnny is out at the Bachelor Ranch and was off a week ago to Hockley, sixty miles away, hunting Mr. Drake and our wagons, and so we are very quiet. But tomorrow Johnny and the boys return, bringing all noise and nonsense in their train. Mr. Pierson returned bringing quite a number of new books to us and Mollie Moore, but to our disgust most of them are by Yankee authors and are unreadable trash. The only good ones are *The Reign of Joseph the Second* and a volume of Tennyson's late poems. He brought a long letter to Mamma from Lt. Dupre, who says he is the happiest of happy men to be again with his family. Mollie Moore, Mr. Pierson, Johnny, and I rode out to Mrs. Tooke's one evening. Mr. Pierson brought Mrs. Tooke a letter from her brother, Gen. Buckner, who is staying quietly in New Orleans. A lovely ride and a gay card party after tea. Mr. Pierson is up nearly every evening and is quite entertaining. All spent a charming day with Mrs. Levy recently and Mr. Pierson, Lionel, and Mollie came back to tea and cards. Lionel is the most worldly wise youth but improves as his mannerisms wear off. Tommie Moore has polished greatly since returning from the army. His sister is working on him, and they are all very adaptable. He is here every day or two. Mollie Moore, Sally Grissman, and I are busy making ourselves palmetto caps and black bodices. The caps will soon be done and the bodices next week, and we expect to astonish the natives with our brave attire next Sunday. Mrs. Tooke is to give a small party on September 5, and we are all as much excited over it as though it were the grand ball of a season. Mrs. Tooke has spent several days with us lately and notes come every two or three days. We all like her very much. We are particular of the party and invite whom we please.

Uncle Johnny has returned, getting his clothes from Austin but nothing else. He re-opens his school in September. How we hope he will make a success of it.

["The Rest," Tyler, Tex.] *Sept. 3*: Just rested after our long, warm walk to church. Mollie and I appeared in all the glories of new caps and bodices, and pretty they are. We

think the caps would please the most exacting milliner and Olympi would be charmed with my velvet waist. Mamma and I have worked untiringly to finish them in time, and our labors were only completed at nine last night. We never worked harder in our lives, but the combination of white silk, velvet, and embroidery meets with unqualified approval. Mamma fashioned our caps after we made the braids, and I embroidered both waists, mine in bunches of blue flowers and Mollie's in pale pink roses. They are beauties.

September is here but My Brother still tarries. Mamma is so impatient to be off that she will not wait many more days on him. She wishes to start everything to the prairie next Thursday, and so our pleasant Tyler life will be broken up forever and a day. I fear we will look back to this last year of our life in Texas with regret. The happiest year of my life.

Jimmy came Thursday from Hockley but will return tomorrow and bring the wagons home. Company all the week. Mrs. Earl spent yesterday with us. We can certify as to the strength of the baby's lungs as he exercised them in screaming most of the time. Mrs. Roane and Capt. Smith called in the morning. He had even more than his usual nonsense to rattle off. I rather dread his presence at Mrs. Tooke's party, which has been postponed to the seventh. I hope he will be duly sober, if he devotes himself to my entertainment. Mr. Levy has come and Mrs. Levy brought him at once to see Mamma. Mamma cut a lot of patterns for Mrs. Levy, who is rather helpless on that subject and has a lot of little people to sew for. Lionel, Mollie Moore, and her brother are over frequently.

Willy came in with Johnny and stayed a few days. All the boys went one afternoon to see the Irvine girls and teased them so that several of them were too angry to speak, and so for the present Johnny's favorite resort is closed to him. He says he has been "turned out of the Lodge."

["Rescue Hut," Hopkins Co. [?], Tex.] *Sept. 11*: Here we are "Lost and far on the prairie wide," wearing away the time as best we may for two days and nights in a real prairie

hut awaiting relief from our place, thirty miles away. The carriage stands in the yard with a crushed wheel, and we are mired up in all sorts of dirt and discomfort in the middle of the wildest prairie with not a tree or a house in sight. We broke down two miles from here journeying on our way to Lamar County with nothing in sight but the broad sweep of the prairie and one lonely tree. We made our way to that. No gentleman with us, no money, no possible way of getting on, and in a great hurry. We were in despair. Richard mounted a mule and scoured the country to find a carriage, wagon, or wheel to take us on, while we with parasols, books, and cushions, betook ourselves to the grateful shade of the tree to await his return. I was fast asleep in the tall grass, and Mamma and Sister were dozing when Richard got back. He could not find any conveyance, but a lady two miles away would give us shelter. So there we were in for a two-mile walk under the burning sun and over the shadowless prairie with a wind blowing hot as a sirocco of the desert. The prospect was appalling, and I foolishly burst into tears. Mamma scolded. I remonstrated. But soon we cooled down in temper, if not in person, and commenced our weary jaunt to shelter.

It is the roughest two-room affair with six or eight people living in it, and with nothing to eat this last day but bread and milk and butter. They killed their last chicken for us yesterday, an old, old hen, but the people are as kind as they can be, and as hospitable. They give us of their best and are really sorry for us. There are two women and a girl and not a scrap of ribbon or lace or any kind of adornment in the house. I never saw a woman before without a ribbon. They have not even a comb. They are the very poorest people I ever saw.

We, that is Mamma, Sister, Johnny, and I, broke up our establishment and started on short notice from Tyler on last Friday, and our entire trip has been a chapter of accidents since. A wheel crushed four miles from town, and after spending most of the day in the woods we returned very reluctantly to Tyler. We had gone the rounds the evening

before making farewell calls and hated to return after so many solemn leavetakings, but go back we must.

The room is filling with the family so must close my book.

The bugs are awful, and so we three slept last night on the carriage cushions and a bolt of domestic out on the front gallery, much against the wishes of our hosts who seemed to think it inhospitable to allow it. But it is impossible to sleep in the rooms with four or five untidy folks, being bled from every pore by the voracious bugs. The natives do not even toss in their sleep from them. They do not know the bugs are there.

A glorious full moon, light enough to read by, and a pleasant breeze. We quite enjoyed our outdoor bunk, especially as we had not slept for two nights. Oh, the happy summer days of our life in Tyler. By our hurried departure we missed seeing again Col. Cochran, Capt. Wylie, Hutch Bowman, and several others who were to be there next week. And all this discomfort would have been spared us if My Brother had only come out when Joe did and made this trip to the farm in Mamma's place. Poor Mamma, what a weight of responsibility and trouble she has had on her hands, not only her own family but Uncle Johnny's, and Uncle Johnny has been so trying and Kate so silly.

*They say tears are quite useless
To undo, amend, or restore;
When I think how useless, my darling,
My tears only fall the more.*

Jimmy started to Hockley Saturday, the day we finally left Tyler, taking the carriage mules and our driver, Thomas, with him. Mamma borrowed a mule from Dr. Meagher and trusted Richard to drive. He knows little about it and one accident follows another. First, the mule has given out and we are only anxious to get him home before worse happens. The tongue broke and then one wheel after another. Everything has gone wrong. We had only one day to prepare and bid our friends adieu. Mrs. Lawrence sent us a splendid cake for our journey. They were kind all the time. It was

hard to tell so many friends good-bye, and we shall never see them again. Tommie Moore went on to Houston with Jimmy. Out to seek his fortune he says. I hated to leave Mollie Moore most of all. We are dear friends. Poor Mrs. Tooke seems so desolate, not knowing what to do. We hope Gen. Buckner will soon come and take charge of her. The party at her house Wednesday passed pleasantly, a large cavalcade from our house going. We packed next day. Dear little Sally and Elise will miss us. They were great pets.

Mollie Moore gave me a pretty copy of *The Lady of the Lake* as a souvenir of our happy friendship. Shall I ever see her cheerful face again? ³⁶

Jimmy and Willy Carson spent the last week with the boys. They will start for Louisiana in late October. Jimmy Carson cut out a beautiful pair of gloves for me from Willy's fawn skin, and I have been sewing on them while journeying along in the carriage.

["Vexation," Lamar County, Tex.] *Sept. 21*: Mamma went to Paris this morning on business (hateful word). Sister is roaming over the place at her own sweet will, and Mrs. Smith is deep in the mysteries of a bodice which she is intent on making exactly like mine. We reached this haven a week ago. Shall we ever forget that forty-mile jolt in a four-mule wagon, the mules at full trot? We made it in a day over a broken, sorry prairie with nothing to eat but dried peaches, uncooked, soggy biscuits, and warm, salty-tasting well water. We were bruised black and blue and were too tired to sleep or eat the first night. We did not find out until nearly night that the wagon floor was much easier than the chairs we were perched in, and we all crouched down in the straw, too worn out to hold up our heads.

The people who had sheltered us utterly refused all pay and were hurt at the idea—and they with absolutely nothing. Truly it is not the rich who are the most generous. Mamma will send them lots of things when she sends for the carriage.

³⁶ Mollie Moore Davis, after many successful years as author and social leader died, in New Orleans, January 1, 1909. There is no record that they ever saw each other again or corresponded.

We found nearly all the Negroes in a state of insubordination, insolent and refusing to work. Mamma had a good deal of trouble with them for a few days. Now they have quieted down and most of those who left have returned, and they are doing as well as "freedmen" ever will, I suppose. We were really afraid to stay on the place for the first two days. We are looking for the boys up from Tyler and for Jimmy and My Brother next week. Then, Ho, for Louisiana!

We have all the butter, milk, and curd that Mamma promised us with wild plums, maypops, and apples in abundance, and Mrs. Smith is a good housekeeper. But it is undeniably a dull spot.

Mr. Kennedy, a neighbor, has given us a beautiful little lap dog. I think it will be Sister's as she loves pets so. Mamma has promised me a fine horse, and then I shall be ready for the start home. Johnny suggested "Grant Grim" as a name for the little doggy; Sister suggested "Emile Dupre" (Lt. Dupre was a great favorite with her); Mamma suggested "Josefa" or "Holmes"; and I, "King Arthur."

I am embroidering a Zouave jacket in blue cashmere for one of Mrs. Kennedy's little girls. Will embroider a wreath of pale pink roses on it. It is the only embroidery silk I have, and the combination is prettier than one would think. Have embroidered scarlet fuchsias on Mrs. Smith's bodice.

Johnny has taken Mr. Smith's place as overseer. The Negroes mind him better.

["Vexation," Lamar County, Tex.] *Oct. 10:* Jimmy and My Brother joined us about ten days ago, and we have never passed ten more unhappy days. Our future is appalling—no money, no credit, heavily in debt, and an overflowed place. No wonder Mamma is so discouraged. Since My Brother's return, we have all had the blues and look forward with dread to our return to Louisiana. But there is nothing else to do. Nothing for us here. Mamma, Sister, and I, with Johnny or Jimmy, will get off early next week, going straight on, while My Brother will bring the Negroes back. The countrabands are all crazy to return to Louisiana, as soon as they realized that My Brother did not wish to take them,

and are on their best behavior. What a treacherous race they are! I doubt whether one will remain with us a week after we return.

The name "Vexation" we have given this place is most appropriate. It has been a most trying job settling up the business, and My Brother and Mr. Smith say everyone they have had dealings with has not only tried but succeeded in cheating them. We are in all the stir and disagreeable confusion of moving, yet preparations to get off advance but slowly, though all four of the menfolks are doing their best to expedite our departure. We have to send such a distance for everything we need.

It seems an ill-advised move to take the Negroes back unless they could be bound by some contract to remain on the place, and that is impossible. It is so expensive and troublesome to move about eighty or ninety Negroes such a distance. Two families are to remain. Warren's is one. Mr. Smith will stay here and try to work this same place, we suppose. Jimmy goes to Tyler this week and will join us somewhere on the road. We will camp out just as we did when we came to Texas but will have a more comfortable vehicle and a more careful driver. Mamma left nearly all of our household furnishings with Uncle Johnny and Kate. They are quite comfortable and he has a good school. I do hope they will get on in life. We do miss the dear little folks, Sally and Elise.

Mamma and Mrs. Smith are away today visiting the dentist at Ladonia, the boys are off on business, and so Sister and I have the house to ourselves. It is delightful to be alone sometimes, a pleasure we have rarely enjoyed since we left Brokenburn. We have lived in crowded quarters all the time. I shall be glad to get to the solitude of my own room at Brokenburn, even if it will be but sparsely furnished. My Brother says all our furniture has been divided out among the Negroes and Yankees. How exceedingly quiet he is. Rarely talks at all. He was never very fluent and being in the army has intensified his silence and reserve, and he seems to take little interest in hearing others. We hope

home life will brighten him up and make him more cheerful. He feels the bitterness of defeat more than anyone we have met. He cannot reconcile himself to give up everything but honor.

Annie Amis is not yet married but will be soon. Emmett Amis is to be married on the twenty-fifth of this month to that fascinating little widow at Oak Ridge. He was devoting himself to her when we were at Mrs. Templeton's. Neither Rose nor Mol Green have married Yankees or anyone else. What stories we do hear.

Our trip will probably take a month. The weather is lovely, and we hope to get home over good roads and to arrive before the fall rains set in. A sad journey to the old scenes.

[Brokenburn] *Nov. 16*: At home again but so many, many changes in two years. It does not seem the same place. The bare echoing rooms, the neglect and defacement of all—though the place is in better repair than most—and the stately oaks and the green grass make it look pleasant and cheerful, though gardens, orchards, and fences are mostly swept away. But if the loved ones who passed through its doors could be with us again, we might be happy yet. But never, never, never more echoes back to our hearts like a funeral knell at every thought of the happy past. We must bear our losses as best we can. Nothing is left but to endure.

We have been at home five days now. We found Other Pa awaiting us. It is the first time we have seen him in three years. He stayed only a few days and is much depressed. He still lives near Hamburg, Ark., on a small cotton place. He went on to Vicksburg. My Brother got in yesterday with his train, making the trip almost as rapidly as we did.

Mamma and Johnny went yesterday to Vicksburg. Mamma hopes to make arrangements for planting next year and will buy indispensable housekeeping articles and replenish our wardrobes, now sadly in need, if she can get the money.

We have by dint of much scrubbing and little furniture made the east room habitable. Mamma, Sister, and I occupy that. So vividly it brings back the memory of dear Aunt

Laura and little Beverly that I start at the slightest noise and almost fancy I can see them. Jimmy joined us at Shreveport and brought the intelligence of little Elise's death, poor, frail little flower. No one could look at her tiny white face and fancy her long for the world. She was a dear good baby.

How still and lifeless everything seems. How I fear that the life at Tyler has spoiled us for plantation life. Everything seems sadly out of time. But no thoughts like these. We must be brave, and to give way to the "blues" now is cowardly. We should be Mark Tapleys.³⁷ We think we shall be able to pick up enough of our furniture scattered through the country to make two or three rooms habitable and that must suffice us until better.

I was just interrupted by a call from Anna Meagher at the gate. They are just making their way home from Texas and had to come by way of Richmond to avoid Tensas Swamp. We spent two days and a night getting through there, and then broke down and had to ride the last seven miles on horse or rather muleback. We met Miss Bettie Carter, Mr. Kaiser, and two of the Carson boys just as we mounted the mules to come through.

[Brokenburn] Nov. 17: My Brother and Jimmy are off hunting, fishing, and spying out the land. Little Sister is absorbed in papers a month old, and I, having made my afternoon toilet—a habit of old that I may as well forget now that evening visiting is a thing of the past—have literally nothing to do and nothing to read except Shakespeare, and one cannot read him all the time. We certainly conned that book in Texas and on our various carriage trips. Mamma and Johnny should nearly know it by heart. There is no resort but scribbling. How many idle hours this book has filled.

Uncle Bob is the best old darkie. He has done the best he could to care for things and is as humble and respectful as ever. Every now and then he brings up presents of candy, raisins, and nuts. Aunt Laura's silver service was buried in

³⁷ Mark Tapley, a character in Charles Dickens' *Martin Chuzzlewit*, was perennially cheerful, despite the most unfavorable circumstances.

the yard, and Uncle Bob in walking one day stepped into a hole. He investigated and found the barrel head had decayed and sunken in. He did not say anything as the Yankees were on the place at the time. He quickly covered it up and that night slipped out and took it to his house, carefully hiding it, but it became noised about among the Negroes and a few spoons were stolen. I suppose his wife, Mary Ann, told as she is the real typical free darkie. The next day he packed the silver all up and took it down to Mrs. Graves to keep. He said he could no longer care for it, and now we have it all. He is the only Negro we know that would not at once on finding it have given or sold it to the darkies. He wants to rent some of the land and plant for himself next year. Mamma will let him have the land rent free. He sold his last cotton for \$1 a pound. I wish we had a thousand bales.

Mamma should be back today. I wonder what she will bring us. We bought our first piece of Yankee finery in Shreveport, a broad black belt with an immense buckle for me.

In camping out this trip, we had every appliance for camping, and people who like camping would have found it pleasant. We enjoyed most stopping with our friends on the road. First were Mrs. Scott and Amelia, now Mrs. Dr. Bass. They are living quite out of the world at Winnsboro [Tex.], the very poorest land one ever saw. They will remain there a year longer. Amelia is perfectly happy and Mrs. Scott, equally miserable, cannot bear the country.

Shreveport was our next place of sojourn. Spent twenty-four hours at Capt. Buckner's with Mrs. Gustine and Ella. Mary's baby is a pretty, black-eyed little creature. Shreveport seemed nearly as busy a place as New Orleans in the old times. Went on from there to Maj. Bryan's near Minden and stayed twenty-four hours. They begged us to spend a month. They live delightfully in a splendid house beautifully furnished, and though they refugeed near Tyler where we met them, the Yankees never went to the place. They saved everything and still have the same house servants. (*En passant*, I do not think our servants will stay about the house much longer.) Our next stop with friends was at Mrs. Wad-

ley's. We were there one night and found them in all the bustle of preparing to move to Savannah, Ga., where they will make their home. We were sorry to see them going so far away where they will never be able to pay us the promised visits. They are dear friends and wonderfully good to us. Most of their servants were gone, and the girls were having to do the work. Took dinner the next day at Mrs. Seale's. They are kind but some way tiresome. From there to Judge N. Richardson's, the prettiest place on Bayou DeSaird. How more than comfortably they live in that stately comfortable home with the beautiful yard with its trees and shrubbery, splendid orchard, and well-worked garden, and with all the old servants and the most lavish table. Mrs. Richardson is a most excellent housekeeper. We quite felt like spending the week with her as she urged us to do. The Yankees had not disturbed their possessions in their two raids on Monroe. Lt., or Mr. Holmes now, came out twice to see us while we were there. He is looking handsome and was beautifully dressed. But alas, he has been spending a wild summer and fall, and though he assured me marrying would reform him, I believe not. A dreadful risk for any woman. I fear there is little hope for him. He expects to go to Maryland soon on a visit to his mother. That may save him.³⁸

We had the pleasure of spending a night at Col. Templeton's. They are safely at home and most comfortable as they saved all their household furnishings. They were very cordial and charmed to see us. They promised to pay us a visit when the roads are passable again. Then we spent a night in the very depths of the swamp, mud in every direction and our first very heavy frost like a snow and real cold in the tent. Next day home. I so wanted to come by Homer and see Annie Amis before her marriage and the other friends still there, but Mamma thought best to push on.

³⁸ Kate herself "saved" him, of course. They were married four years later. He later operated a plantation in Ouachita Parish called Rattlesnake Ridge and was known as "the Duke of Rattlesnake Ridge." Afterwards he was sheriff of Madison Parish from 1881 until 1888 and is credited with being the leader in the transfer of public records from Delta to Tallulah on March 6, 1885, thereby making Tallulah "by right of possession" the seat of government for Madison Parish. He died in Tallulah, surviving his wife by several years.

1867

"The burden of defeat"

[Brokenburn] Sept. 22: A long silence and a year of hard endeavor to raise a crop, reconstruct the place with the problem of hired labor, high water, and cotton worms. Mamma had little trouble in getting advances in New Orleans to plant. Cotton is so high that merchants are anxious to advance to put in a crop, and there is much Northern capital seeking investment in that field. Mr. Given became Mamma's merchant. Col. Cornelius Fellowes, her old friend, has not resumed business, or only in a small way. The Negroes demanded high wages, from \$20 to \$25 for men, in addition to the old rations of sugar, rice, tobacco, molasses, and sometimes hams. Many of the old hands left, and My Brother went to New Orleans and brought back a number of ex-Negro soldiers, who strutted around in their uniforms and were hard to control. I was deadly afraid of them. During the spring while Mamma and I were in New Orleans (Mamma on business and she took me for my pleasure), and Uncle Bo and My Brother and Jimmy were away for a few hours, Johnny had a fight with a young Negro in the field, shot and came near killing him, and was mobbed in return. Johnny would have been killed but for the stand one of the Negroes made for him and Uncle Bo's opportune arrival just as the Negroes brought him to the house—a howling, cursing mob with the women shrieking, "Kill him!" and all brandishing pistols and guns. It came near breaking up the planting, and it is a pity it did not as it turned out. Johnny had to be sent away. He was at school near Clinton [Miss.] and the Negroes quieted down and after some weeks the wounded boy recovered, greatly to Johnny's relief. He never speaks

now of killing people as he formerly had a habit of doing. He came home when school closed and there was no further trouble.

Then the water came up and we were nearly overflowed. The cotton planted was very late, and when it was looking as luxuriant and promising as possible and we saw ease of mind before us, the worms came. In a few days the fields were blackened like fire had swept over them. We made about twenty bales and spent \$25,000 doing it. What most distresses me is that none of that money went for our personal comfort. All of it went to the Negroes. Mamma would buy only bare necessities for the table and plainest clothes for the family. Not a luxury, no furniture, carpets, or anything. We are worse off for those things than even in Texas and such a sum spent! But Mamma said it was not honest to spend the money on anything but making the crop. All in this section have suffered in the same way, and for awhile they seemed stunned by their misfortunes. But now the reaction has come, and all are taking what pleasure offers.

Old neighbors and new ones have come in and all seemed to be anxious to be together and talk over their trials and tribulations. There has been much visiting and various picnics and fish fries. I would not go at first. I felt like I did not want to see anybody or ever dance again. I felt fully forty years old, but Mamma made me go after a good cry. Once there, I was compelled to exert myself, and soon I was enjoying it all. The burden of some of the years slipped from my shoulders, and I was young again. It was pleasant to talk nonsense, to be flattered though one knew it was flattery, and to be complimented and fussed over. So since then, Mamma, the boys, and all of us have been going to everything and have found even poverty in company more bearable than when suffered alone.

About this time we formed several pleasant acquaintances, Mrs. Winn and the Bynum girls—all of them have changed their names now, Mrs. Keene Richards, Mrs. Dr. Buckner, and Mrs. Bowdin Keene. We met often but never progressed beyond acquaintanceship. Dr. Gaither has been a gay anus-

ing acquaintance, and I find entertainment in Dr. Ellis—"Cousin Orin," as he claims to be. He is distantly related but the others do not much like him. The Nutt family we found the most pleasant of all, and they added most to our entertainment. Such bright, intelligent women. We visited and received them frequently, and they were just as kind as they could be. We were great friends for some months. But they talked too freely and too emphatically, and My Brother put his veto on our going there again. He would not allow it, and so we had to lose those friends. We regretted it so and could never explain what to them could only seem heartless caprice. They had been unvaryingly kind and polite to us, and how I hated to make such a return. It had one happy effect. It put a stop to Mr. DeWeese's visits. A Yankee living with the Nutts and the most unblushingly unprincipled man in the world, he seemingly has no conception of right and wrong.

All the gaiety has been in the Omega neighborhood. Goodrich's is as solemn as ever. The festivities wound up that winter with a grand ball given by the young men at Villa Vista. A most charming time. I never enjoyed an evening, or rather night, so much in my life. It was quite sunup when we got to Mrs. Nutt's where we stayed until evening, when Mamma went home and I went to Mrs. Winn's, then living on part of Dutchly plantation. Stayed there several days helping Missie in her wedding preparations. She married Capt. Buckner of Shreveport, and a party of us went as far as Vicksburg with them on the boat.¹ We missed the return boat and had to stay all night. Went up to see Aunt Sally for the first time in several years, but had to return to the hotel to stay with the Morris girls. All spent next day with Aunt Sarah. Dr. Gaither was a delightful escort. Uncle Bo, who is staying in Vicksburg now, went around with us. Saw Jimmy who had gone down a few weeks previously to study medicine at the hospital.

I had been to Vicksburg once before in the fall before Aunt

¹ Mississippi (Missie) Morris married R. T. Buckner. In 1887 she published a novel, *Toward the Gulf*.—*Library of Southern Literature*, XV, 62.

Sarah's return from Bladen Springs. Dr. Buckner and My Brother, Mrs. Winn, Carrie and Emily Bynum—Dr. Buckner was "doing the devoted" to Emily and My Brother to Carrie—enjoyed all the delicacies of the season. Mrs. Winn and I, having no lovers on hand, enjoyed a nice time going around together. If My Brother had only had money, we fancy Carrie would have been a member of our family by now. She is pretty, gay, and attractive, but her mother announced to everybody her daughters would marry only rich men, which now by 1867 they have all done. They were great belles in the neighborhood for a time.

The last day of 1866 Johnny and I went to Vicksburg, he on his way to school at Oxford [Miss.] and I to make Aunt Sarah a visit. A heavy snow fell that night, but we reached Vicksburg in time for New Year's calls, a custom introduced there within the last two years. Had a lovely visit of a month. Mr. Miller and I had buried the hatchet, and when he came to see me in the fall when I was in Vicksburg, he was as nice and entertaining as he had formerly been detestable. Went out constantly to parties and theatre and had much company. Dr. Gaither came down for a week in town, and as he nearly lived at Aunt Sarah's we had a gay time. Aunt Sarah liked him very much, all but his way of parting his hair in the middle with brown curls crisping all over his head. He is very handsome, tall, blond, well-educated, graceful and accomplished—draws well, plays, sings, and writes amusingly. He went up the river to live that winter. His letters are excellent.

I came home and we all remained quietly hidden in the swamp until April when "the waters rose, the waters swelled" to the height of about four feet in the yard. It was creeping into the house when we moved out bag and baggage to Mr. Goodrich's, and after a time rented part of Wilton, where Col. Chambliss' family were living. We stayed there until August and came home to find it looking so green, cool, and quiet. The grass was a foot high in the yard, and all was looking as fresh and sweet as a fair May day. My Brother made desperate exertions all spring in company with Maj.

James, who rented the Winn Forest place, and other planters to keep the Harris levee from breaking. Finding it impossible, he rented land from Mrs. Henderson, and when the levee broke, he went there to live. The three weeks spent at Mr. Goodrich's were delightful to us. They did everything for our comfort and pleasure and begged us to stay until we could return home. Mrs. Carson came down nearly every day, but it was long before Mamma would go there. She begged us to stay with her until the water fell, as if we would after her long coolness. Still, it was kind of her. As a peace offering to me, she brought over one of the inevitable young preachers to call—Mr. McConnell, a real flirtatious young preacher and quite entertaining. We saw much of him all summer. Everybody was good to us. Nearly every family in the neighborhood asked us to stay with them until the falling of the waters.

We settled at Wilton, Col. Chambliss keeping the lower story and giving us the second. As it is a large delightful house with two kitchens we kept house pleasantly and had much company. How kind that family were to us and how funny, and what a beauty Janie, the daughter of the house, is. How comical Miss Kate and Miss Tia, cousins visiting them, and oh, what a pair Mr. and Mrs. Chambliss. Altogether being intimate with the family was better than going to a play, and very intimate they would be spending hours in our rooms. Those were charming, funny months we spent there, with everything at home going to rack and ruin: the place under water, the mules with glanders—My Brother had sixteen shot one day—and the Negroes dying of cholera and instead of taking the doctor's remedies eating green figs and salt, collapsing in a few hours.

We had many visitors: the Bynums, now living at Transylvania with Mrs. Richards, the Keenes—Mary Keene such a nice girl and to think she married a Yankee—Mrs. Carson, Goodrichs, Emily, the Newmans, and all the gentlemen around, principally Mr. McConnell, Mr. Valentine—the Valentines were more deeply overflowed even than we—Mr. Rhotan, and the fun we had with Capt. Porter in the house, a guest of the Chambliss'.

After going home and after getting all in working order about the house—we generally managed to keep a cook as that is new and disagreeable work to us all—our principal amusement was pecan hunting, as there were such quantities. The two Mr. Valentines were often with us. Nothing to do on their place, and they were lonely. Mrs. Goodrich made us one visit, her first and last visit to us, for in a few days she was taken ill with yellow fever and died within the week. I was with her most of the time. She had seemed very fond of me and sent out begging me to come when she found she was ill enough for a nurse. We sincerely regretted her death. She was a good, conscientious woman and her life not a happy one. Six or eight people died around Goodrich's with yellow fever that season. We fortunately escaped that trouble, though Mamma's health has not been good since the first summer we came home. It makes us very anxious to see her ill so frequently. Jimmy had come home just before the yellow fever broke out at Vicksburg and quarantine was established. He regretted so much not remaining, but we were so thankful to have him at home out of danger. We formed Mrs. Meux's acquaintance during the summer. The Doctor and she were in Nevada until after the close of the war returning by way of Panama. An odd person she is and a funny pair they are. But we are all devoted to Dr. Meux, even with his funny ways.

My Brother used to come to Wilton every Sunday to see us, and Mr. Rhotan frequently came with him. This was sufficient to start the report that we were engaged. The poor fellow was innocent of all intentions, only "thinking Miss Kate a nice young lady," which I think he really does believe. Anyway, being a bashful six feet, four inches of mortality, the report scared him away, and only recently has he commenced visiting us again.

Mr. Rhotan and I became quite chummy when I went to stay a week or ten days with Mrs. Henderson after Mr. Henderson's death. We thought her so desolate and alone until her sister, Mrs. Prentice, came to stay with her—two lonely, elderly widows. Mr. Rhotan is very easy to talk to. He

does not say much himself but looks so appreciative and entertained, while Mr. Reigart is just impossible to talk to. He looks utterly bored and indifferent, no matter what the subject. I always dread to see him come. Fortunately his visits to us are rare. Capt. Louis Guyon came to see My Brother this summer, and I believe I like him better than anyone who came to the house. He is an old schoolmate of My Brother's at Frankfort, Ky. He has captivated me "entirely—entirely." He is so quick, sprightly, and ugly—and a *sugar planter*. It was always my ambition to marry a sugar planter. If he comes this fall, we will see if he improves on acquaintance.

■

1868

"The outlook is brighter"

[Rose Hill] *Sept. ?*: In January My Brother rented this place knowing that Brokenburn would be again overflowed, and we moved out the latter part of the month. My Brother lost money again last year planting, and this year he determined to farm, planting a little of everything. Johnny and Jimmy are both at home, and having nothing to do pulled off their coats and rolled up their sleeves and went to work to raise a crop of corn and potatoes for themselves. They have succeeded well as they will clear several hundred dollars. We all regret so much Jimmy's refusal to go back to the hospital. He seems cut out for a doctor, and the physicians at the hospital say he has a decided touch for it. All urge him to go back, but because he will have to be dependent on My Brother for awhile he will not study medicine any longer. We fear he is throwing away the best chance of his life. The boys are so hot and tired when they come in from the fields.

Dr. Ellis sent us *Cometh Up as a Flower* by a new author and it is very entertaining so far.¹

[Rose Hill] *Sept. 28*: Mother has been in Vicksburg for a month on a visit to Aunt Sarah. It is her first outing for eighteen months. We so hope it will benefit her as her health has been bad for more than a year. She is seldom out of bed more than a week at a time. It took great persuasion and the pointed urging of the whole family to induce her to go on this visit that Aunt Sarah has been begging her to make for months.

¹ Published in 1867, the first of eighteen popular novels by Rhoda Broughton (1840-1920).

Jimmy is now on the wharf boat, Johnny at Omega, and Sister, My Brother, and I have it all our own way with but little to do. My Brother is making an excellent crop and is much more cheerful.

Just heard of Sallie Newman's marriage to Mr. Marshall Collier. He has been devoting himself to her for eight long years, and she gave up the fight at last. She is a classmate of mine from Warren County and has been quite a belle, though she is a very bright girl. Sister and I are hammering away at translating one of Victor Hugo's stories. How we wish Sister could be sent off to school for two years, but it has been impossible. No money. It seems on our steps "unmerciful disaster has followed fast and followed faster" for years. Let us hope that now the current will change and success will be our portion, as the outlook is brighter than for three years.

This is a pleasant neighborhood, just across the road from Maj. Morancy's, and everybody has been kind and polite about calling and coming in at all times. Hermie Davenport is a pleasant acquaintance of the summer, staying with Mrs. Meagher with her mother. She is a most unworldly girl of strong affections. She has been with us for a few days lately. We all went down to Judge Brynes' to see her off on the *Rubicon* on her way to Chicot, Ark., where she is to teach. The boat not coming, we all adjourned to Judge Brynes' and had another of those inevitable dances that have been given so often this summer. Mary and Katie Byrnes, Louise Meagher, and the other girls never seem to tire of them, but they wear me out—such a sameness. I doubt not that I am getting too old for such gaieties. The men and boys about here are so silly and boyish in conversation.

Mr. Valentine came the day Mamma left and spent two weeks. We carried him around to see everybody. Sister and he are still great cronies. It has been an enjoyable life since we came here in January. It is a pleasant enough cottage house, after we got it thoroughly cleaned. There is a lovely little flower yard and a splendid orchard, and the kindest and most sociable neighbors with various little entertainments and dances.

A perfect trip by a large party of us to Greenville [Miss.] in June on the *Allen*, Capt. White's boat, Mamma chaperoning the party. The Morris girls were on coming up from New Orleans, Dr. Gaither joined us at Greenville, and they came back and spent a lovely week with us. Dr. Gaither is a charming friend and his letters are excellent. We have new books and papers *ad libitum*, a luxury we missed for years.

My Brother has just sent Mamma money to buy our winter clothes, and Sister and I are jubilant at the prospect of new dresses and bonnets. We have lived on very little of late years, little bought that was not absolutely necessary. They have dressed me better than any of the others. I have not wanted for anything indispensable for a young lady, but the only money I have spent really as I wished was five dollars of the ten Uncle Bob gave me when Mamma and I went to New Orleans three winters ago.

Uncle Bo lived with us the first year after we came back. The next year he lounged away in Vicksburg. This year he is out in Hinds County working with his hands and writes most cheerfully. He says he is doing well and is coming to see us Christmas. So we take heart for him and hope he has turned over a new page.

What splendid fellows my brothers are. They are all so good to us and such handsome boys. Sister looks almost the same, scarcely older than three years ago. We hope she can go to school this fall and make her debut next fall. If not, I shall beg Mamma to put long dresses and a waterfall [chignon] on her and bring her out this winter. She has a gay cheerful nature, and I hope will have a happy girlhood.

Mamma's bright hopeful spirit never changes. She is as always the ruling power with us all, the center and light of our home. How much she will have to tell us on her return, and maybe Aunt Sarah will come with her.

Well, this is the last page of the book that has gone with me through all our journeyings. Looking back to the beginning so many years ago, I realize what an unthankful, wicked girl I was not to be supremely happy. With youth, health, and everything surrounding me for comfort and happiness,

with unmistakable blessings, I was yet an unsatisfied, discontented girl. It has taken trouble to teach me my faults, and how earnestly I try now to enjoy instead of repine, to be thankful instead of fault-finding. I will try always to see the silver lining to the cloud. All my life I have been surrounded with love and care, far more than I deserved, and I will try in the future to be more worthy of the blessings that brighten my pathway.

So this is the end—shall I ever care to write again?

FINIS

Index

- Abercrombie, Mr., 21
 Airlie Plantation, 15
 Alabama, 92n, 169 and n., 9
 Alexander, Lt., 292, 320, 328
 Alexander, Mr., 314
 Alexander, Mrs. Mary, 234
 Alexander, Mrs., 44, 50, 120, 152, 153, 196, 197, 290, 318, 320, 322, 327
 Alexandria, La., 24n., 194 and n., 208n., 214, 244n., 257n., 280 and n., 304
 Allen, Capt., 209
 Allen, Charley, 264, 329
 Allen, Mrs. Charley, *see* Eugenia Rossman
 Allen, Henry W., 278n.
 Amis, Mrs. Henrietta, xxi, 149, 150, 151, 167, 204, 306, 341
 Amis, Annie, xxi, 149, 150, 151, 154, 155, 235, 276, 306, 323, 335, 364, 367
 Amis Emmett, xxi, 204, 306, 364
 Anchorage, 188, 190, 208
 Anderson, Col., 292
 Anderson, Gen. R. H., 60n.
 Anderson, Mr., 201
 Anderson, Mrs., 292
 Anthony, Mr., 32, 208
 Arkansas, the, xiii; at Vicksburg, 133 and n.
 Arkansas, 83, 100n., 154, 213, 238, 244, 246, 267 and n., 273, 277, 279, 280 and n., 282, 286n., 295, 296n., 299, 300, 301, 338, 376; refugees from, 242 and n., 329; conquest of, 253n.; Federals captured in, 283; Confederate troops in, refuse to surrender, 335-36; governor of, at surrender conference, 343n.
 Arkansas Post, 168 and n.
 Army of Virginia, 253, 308, 310, 323, 335n.
 Assumption Parish, La., 252 and n.
 Atlanta, Ga., 285n., 313n., 316n.; fall of, reported, 300 and n.
 Austin, Cousin Jenny, xxi, 30, 34, 42, 49, 71, 80, 81, 86, 91, 92, 95, 99, 143, 145, 159, 161; marries Dr. Saunders, 160
 Austin, Cousin Titia (Letitia), xxi, 34, 80, 81, 86, 91, 92, 96, 99, 143, 145; marries Charles Frazer, 93-94 and n.
 Austin, Uncle, 95, 224; marries, 304
 Austin, Texas, 242, 255, 356, 357
 Aunt Lucy (housekeeper), 7, 9, 42, 51, 63, 64, 171, 331; runs away, 35; fights with Jane, 170-72; child of, dies with measles, 176; berates mistress, 209
 Baily, Charles, 65
 Baker, Mr., 106, 113, 120
 Ball's Bluff, Va., 71
 Banks, Gen. N. P., xvi, 118, 278n.; threatens Alexandria, La., 194n.; defeat at Mansfield, La., 280 and n.; retreating, 284
 Baptist, meeting of, 228; revival in Paris, Texas, 232; church in Paris, Texas, 233 and n.; description of people at revival of, 241
 Barr family, 235, 288
 Barr, Joe, 203
 Barr, Julia, 203, 217, 219-21, 252
 Barr, Mary, 44
 Barr, Mrs. Bow (Bo), 176, 193, 215, 217, 305
 Bartow, Col. F. S., 45 and n.
 Bass, Mr., 147
 Bass, Mrs., *see* Amelia Scott
 Bass, Mollie, 66, 144
 Bass, Polk, 144
 Bass, Theresa, 66, 80, 120, 144

- Bastrop, La., 205, 299 and n, 304;
Walker's division at, 295n; Yankee
depredations at, 325
- Baton Rouge, La., xii, 84, 98, 115,
128, 133n, 252n.
- Baxter, Mrs, 273
- Bayou DeSaird (La.), 206, 367
- Bayou Macon, 80 and n., 89, 95, 119,
127, 131, 137, 138, 151, 153, 163,
165n, 168n., 169, 174, 176, 180,
188, 189, 199, 200, 209, 267
- Bear Lake, La., 209
- Beauregard, Gen P. G. T., 92n, 100n -
102, 108, 117 and n., 211, 213n, 244,
290, 327, rumored killed, 326 and n.
- Bedford, Mrs., 221
- Bell, Mrs, 141
- Bellevue, La., 222 and n
- Belmont, Mo., 69 and n, 71
- Bence, Mrs., 52
- Benton, Capt., 164
- Benton, Mrs, 318
- Benton's Artillery, 164
- Bernard, Mrs., 80
- Bethel, Va, 31 and n.
- Birchett, Capt George, 312, 315, 318,
319, 324, 336, 341, 343-45, 347
- Blackmore, Mrs, 255
- Blackwood's Magazine*, 40n., 42
- Bladen Springs, Ala., xxi, 243, 349,
371
- Blakely, Mr. 152, 163
- Blanchard, Gen. Albert G., 139 and
n; troops of, 139
- Blankenship, Miss, 58, 71
- Blanton, Mrs, 139
- Bledsoe, Mr, 62, 126
- Bledsoe, Miss, 124
- Blount, Gen J. G., 253 and n.
- Bocage, Miss, 255
- Bohanan, Mrs Ann, 54
- Bolivar County, Miss, 143
- Bonham, Belle, 261
- Bonham, Mrs. Mary T., 259-62
- Bonham, Tex., 244 and n., 315
- Boone, Capt, 326
- Boone, Dr, 315, 319, 330
- Boone, Miss Kate, *see* Kate Boone
Ragan, Mrs. John Ragan
- Boone, Mr., 334
- Booth, Mrs., 104
- Booth, John Wilkes, 333 and n, 341
and n.
- Booth, Pattie, 104
- Booths, the, 21
- Boren, Capt, 319, 324, 352
- Boren, Julia, 328
- Boston Mountain (Pea Ridge), Ark,
98 and n
- Bowling Green, Ky, 90
- Bowman, Dr, 153
- Bowman, J. H., 289
- Bowman House, Jackson, Miss, 10,
143
- Bowman, Hutchins (Hutch), 67, 284,
321, 355, 360
- Boyd, Mrs, 37, 39
- Boydton Station, Va., 315
- Boyer, Joe, 52
- Boyle, Maj, 84
- Boyle, Thomas R., 94 n
- Bradforte, Col, 325-26, 339, 341, 343,
346
- Bradforte, Mrs, 325-26, 329, 339, 341,
343
- Bragg, Gen Braxton, 178-79, 243,
253, 263; commands at Vicksburg,
180
- Breckinridge, Clifton Rodas, 286n.
- Breckinridge, John Cabell, 120 and n.,
126 and n., 131, 286n.
- Bridges, Allen, 132, 140, death of, 264
- Brigham, Capt., 303-304
- Briscoe, Claud, death of, 264
- Brokenburn Plantation, xi, xii, xiii,
xiv, xv, xviii, xv, xxi, 3, 38, 48, 82,
103, 186n, 205, 209-10, 212, 245,
262, 309, 314n., 346, 352, 365, 368;
area of, xi; description of, 4-11;
house servants at, 8; flight from,
194; My Brother returns to, 350;
conditions at, after the war, 363;
Stones return to, 364; overflowed,
375
- Broughton, Rhoda, xviii, 375 and n.
- Bruce, Mrs., 307, 317, 322-23, 327
- Bry, Judge Henry, 322n.
- Bryan, Maj., 366
- Buck, Capt., 286, 329, 332, 337, 341,
343

- Buckner, Beverly, xiv, xvi, xxi, 28, 70-71, 73, 81, 86, 88, 91, 101, 124, 131, 153, 156, 164, 186, 189n, 191, 193, 198-200, 203, 215, 218, 269, 317, 349, 363; dies, 309
- Buckner, Dr C B, xx, 16, 19, 28, 70-72, 81, 92ff, 99, 101-103, 108, 113-14, 125, 136, 140, 142-43, 149, 153, 163, 164, 171, 174, 180, 191, 205, 217-18, 243, 263, 265, 279, 334, 349, 350, 371
- Buckner, Mrs C B (Aunt Laura), xiv, xvi, 11, 28, 46, 48, 70ff., 81, 86, 88, 91, 95, 99, 101-103, 105, 124, 142-43, 145, 149, 150, 152, 153, 156, 157, 159, 160, 161, 164, 170, 171, 172, 182, 185, 189n., 192 93, 198ff, 208, 210 11, 215 16, 218 and n., 219, 243, 264 65, 269, 365; biography, xx-xxi; dies, 319
- Buckner, Capt., 99, 113, 222, 264, 309, 366
- Buckner, Col., 141, 258
- Buckner, Gen. S. B., 329, 343n., 357, 361
- Buckner, Maj., 306
- Buckner, Mary, 306
- Buckner, Mr., 99
- Buckner, Mrs., 107, 120, 136, 233, 246, 248, 265, 317, 369
- Buckner, Rev. R. C., 233 and n.
- Buckner, R. T., 370 and n.
- Buckner, Mrs. R. T., *see* Missie Morris
- Bulwer-Lytton, Edward George, xviii, 82n., 138, 243, 299
- Burbridge, Gen. Stephen G., 165n.
- Burney, Mr., 109
- Burnside, Gen. Ambrose E., 88 and n., 89n.
- Butler, Gen. B. F., 105n., 115; "woman order" of, 111 and n.; proclamation of, 125-26; reported captured, 290 and n.
- Butler, Mattie, 328
- Butts, Mrs., 47
- Butts, Misses, 48
- Butts, Eva, 264
- Byrnes, Judge, 52, 129, 376
- Byrnes, Katie, 376
- Byrnes, Mary, 376
- Bynum, family, 372; girls, 369; Carrie, 371; Emily, 371
- Bywaters, Dr., 233
- Camden, Ark., 222, 238, 248, 272, 277, 284, 295n., 299n.; planters seek refuge at, 205 and n.; government stores moved from, 242n
- Camp Ford, Tyler, Texas, xvi, xvii, 257n., 283, 323n.; prison life at, 290n.
- Campbell, J. A., 316
- Campbell, Mr., 52
- Campti, La., 214n., 217n., 277 and n.
- Canals, xiii, xv, 128, 174 and n.; Federals attempt to cut, at Vicksburg, 125 and n.; at DeSoto, 168; impressed slaves work on, 173 and n.; at Lake Providence, 175 and n.; at Ashton, 176
- Canton, Miss., 143, 160
- Carouth, Mrs., 330
- Carson, family, xvii, 24, 45, 63, 121, 190, 289, 346, 365
- Carson, Eddie (Edward L.), xxi, 37, 236, 240, 251, 255 37, 267, 270 72, 274, 280, 282 83, 286, 292, 308, 316, 321, 325, 337
- Carson, Dr. James G., xxi, 21, 29, 37, 43 44, 62ff., 84, 95 96, 120, 134, 139, 148, 161, 186, 188, 190, 197, 200 202, 206, 223, 230, 251, 269; treatment of slaves, 41; dies, 236
- Carson, Mrs. James G. (Catherine B.), xxi, 21, 25, 27, 37, 39, 41, 51, 55 56, 58 59, 61ff., 71 73, 80, 89, 97 98, 107, 118, 120ff., 131, 136, 141, 144 45, 148 49, 151, 161, 188 89, 202 203, 206, 208, 230, 235 36, 239, 248 49, 250ff., 258, 264, 266ff., 272 74, 279, 282 84, 286 87, 289, 291 92, 308, 314 15, 320 21, 323, 325 27, 329, 331, 336ff., 341 45, 348, 351, 355, 372
- Carson, Jimmy (James), xxi, 37, 80, 249 50, 252, 257, 268, 271 72, 279, 282 83, 288, 291, 307, 311 13, 316, 336 37, 346, 350 51, 354, 356, 361
- Carson, Joe (Joseph), xxi, 25, 29, 37, 39, 44, 47, 50, 54, 56, 60, 63, 65,

- 67, 69, 74-75, 78, 80, 95, 97, 106, 119-121, 124, 126-27, 129, 131-32, 136, 140, 149, 169, 187, 248, 258, 261, 263ff., 269, 276-77, 282-84, 286-87, 290, 294-96, 298, 301, 304, 306, 308, 310-12, 316, 345-46, 350, 360
- Carson, Katie (Catherine B.), xxi, 118, 121, 188, 236, 254, 256, 273, 274, 286, 292, 310, 321, 337
- Carson, Willy (William W.), xxi, 131, 230, 253, 255, 276, 279, 286-87, 294, 296, 346, 350-51, 354, 356, 358, 361
- Carter, Bettie, 25, 78, 80, 97, 141, 145, 296, 365
- Catlin, John D., 17 and n., 30, 45, 53, 57, 61, 67, 78-79, 95, 97, 104, 126, 138, 162, 176, 184, 202, 219; death of, 270
- Cavalier, Joe, 57, 76
- Cavalier, Mrs. Virginia, 76
- Chambers, Mr., 63
- Chambliss, Mrs., 372
- Chambliss, Capt., 300
- Chambliss, Col., 371, 372
- Chambliss, Janie, 372
- Chancellorsville, Va., battle of, 212 and n., 215
- Chapin, Mr., 52
- Charleston, S. C., 74, 204 and n., 253; fall reported, 244 and n.; surrender reported, 331
- Chattanooga, Tenn., 94n., 218n., 243
- Chickahominy, Va., 117 and n., 118
- Chickamauga, Ga., 257 and n., 258, 264
- Clark, Lt., 59
- Clark, Mrs., 266
- Clarkson, Mr. H. B., 23n., 32, 122, 253
- Clarkson, Ben, 23 and n., 24, 40, 63, 80, 113, 120, 144, 149-50, 253, 261, 264-65, 319, 347
- Clarkson, Will, 144
- Cleghorn, Mr., 268
- Clinton, Miss., xvi, xx, 79, 186, 263; Brother Coley dies at, 259 ff.
- Cochran, Col., 304, 360
- Cochran, Mrs., 176
- Colemans, the, 104
- Collier, Marshall, 376
- Collier, Mrs. Marshall, *see* Sally Newman
- Colton, Molie, 355
- Columbus, Ky., 69, 92n., 94, 96, 98-99, Columbus, Miss., 93-94
- Compton, Mary, 206, 210, 213
- Compton, Nora, 210, 213
- Confederacy, 100n., 118, 146-47, 189, 200, 223n., 233, 278n., 279n., 281n., 286n., 289, 301n., 316n., 340 and n.; United Daughters of, Madison Infantry Chapter, xxii; United Daughters of, Paris, France Chapter, 278n.; veterans of, 335
- Confederate, memorial in Tallulah, La., xxii; cakes, 291, 344; currency reduced, 278n., "worms," 298
- Congress, U. S., 36 and n., 37, 180 and n., 286n
- Conley, Mr., 173, 184
- Conscription, 103, 131 and n., 138, 170, 180 and n.; Act, 95n.; militia drafted, 229; Act of 1862 amended, 282 and n.
- Coopers Wells, Miss., 160; Federal raid on, 243
- Cornth, Miss., 108, 114, 117 and n., 121, 149
- Cotton, xi, xii, 19, 31, 46, 53, 63, 91, 96, 113, 128, 239n., 327n., 364, 368; burned at Brokenburn, xii; ginning and picking, 4; weighing, 54; burning of, by planter, 100-101; burned in New Orleans, 103-104; My Brother burns, 177-78; failure of crop of, 298, loss on crop of, 369
- Cotton Gin, Miss., xx, 186, 187
- Cowan, William, 48
- Cox, Mr., 123
- Cox, Capt. Thomas, 213
- Cox, Sally, 312
- Crith, Shirley, 252
- Curry, William C. (planter), 16n., 23, 32, 38, 41, 49, 62, 80, 88, 132, 136, 139, 146, 153, 180, 205, 208, 210
- Curry, Mrs. William C. (Hester), 16n., 23, 38-39, 42, 44, 58, 65, 72, 88, 121, 124, 130, 134, 140, 145, 147, 154, 162, 211, 217

- Curry, Abe, 49-50, 53, 136
 Curry, Mrs. Abe, 114, 121, 133
 Curry, Addie, 142
 Curry, Annie, 23
 Curry, Bettie, 44
 Curry, How, 37, 82, 122
 Curry, Huldah, 16n., 42-43, 65, 74, 141
 Curry, John, 218
 Curry, Kate, 16n., 42, 58
 Curry, Leila, 16n
 Curry, Mary, 16n., 65, 74, 141, 162
 Curry, Sue, 114, 124
 Curry, Sybelia (Belia), 16n., 42
- Dallas, La., 165
 Dalton, Ga., 285 and n
 Dancy, Dr. David, 38n., 206
 Dancy, Mrs. David, 38 and n., 117
 Dancy, Dr. Lafayette, 128, 132
 Dancy, Charley, 45, 46
 Dancy, Lou, 154
 Dancy, Mary, 154
 Davenport, Hermie, 376
 Davies, Mr., 95
 Davis, Jefferson, 14, 200 201; elected president, 66; reported fleeing to Trans-Mississippi Dept., 341; capture of, 341n.; reported not captured, 348; imprisonment of, 355 and n.
 Davis, Ruby, 144 45
 Davis, Thomas E., 321n.
 Davis, Mrs. Thomas E., *see* Mollie E. Moore
 Dawson, Fannie, 204, 217
 Dawson, Nannie, 204, 217, 253
 DeFrance, Mrs., 306
 DeSoto, La., 46 and n., 69, 81, 103, 125, 151; canal at, 168 and n.; camp at, 171, 177
 Deane, Mr., 188, 192 93, 203
 Deane, Mrs., 193 94
 Delhi, La., 140, 170, 188, 191 92, 207, 208, 218 and n., 219; Federal troops attack, 165 and n.; Gen. Walker's campaign from, 239n.; conditions at, 248 49
 Delta, La., xx, xxi, 14n., 307
 Devine, Dr., 16, 39, 47, 57 58, 60, 61, 72, 88, 128, 156 57, 172
- DeWeese, Mr., 370
 Dobbs, Anna B (Mrs. Meagher), xxi, 25, 26-27, 55, 59, 64, 67, 72, 75, 78, 80, 81-82, 89, 98, 109, 117, 122, 131, 136, 138, 145, 153-54, 156, 257, 269, 290, 306, 307, 314, 321, 325, 334, 356, 365; Kate's letter to, 223-25, engagement of, 258
 Dobbs, Charles, xxi, 21, 29, 30, 44
 Donnelly, Mr., 313
 Dorch, Mrs., 219
 Drake, Mr., 357
 Drew, Mr., 63
 Driewery's Bluff, Va., 290n.
 Duganne, Col. A. J. II., 323 and n.
 Dunlap, Hugh, 40
 Dupre, Lt. Emile, 315, 322, 328, 332, 335, 338 39, 341-42, 344, 347, 357, 362
- Earl, Mrs., 358
 Eighth Texas Volunteer Infantry, 212
 Eighteenth Texas Volunteer Infantry, 212
 Ellet, Col. Alfred W., 123
 Elliott, Col., *see* Ellet
 Elliott, Dr., 3, 37, 90, 104
 Ellis, Dr., 370, 375
 Ellison, Mr., 163, 170
 Ellsworth, Col. E. Elmer, 24
 Ellsworth, Mr., 170
 Emancipation Proclamation, 148; Lincoln's preliminary, 145
 Emry, Capt., 275, 283, 330
 Erwin, Capt., 299
 Evans, Mr., 184
 Evans, Mrs., 175
 Ewing, Capt., 295, 304
 Ewing, Mr., 16, 29, 37, 59
- Fair Oaks, or Seven Pines, Va., 117
Fair Play, Confederate transport, captured, 137
 Farragut, Admiral D. G., 122n., 126n., 130n.
 Farrar, Judge, 221
 Faulkner, Capt. A., 213n.
 Featherston, Gen., 167
 Fellowes, Cornelius, 18 and n., 60, 368

- Ferguson, Col. Thomas Barker, 101-102, 115, 120, 125, 140
 Fishing Creek, Ky., 85
 Florence, Ala., 90
Florida, the, 169
 Floyd, La., 133 and n., 205, 217, 218; Yankee raid on, 297-328
 Fluellen, Mr., 267-68
 Fluellen, boys, 267
 Fontaine, Mrs., 106, 146
 Fontaine, Mackey, 60
 Forrest, Gen. N. B., 281
 Fort Donelson, Tenn., 90, 94, 99, 116, 143
 Fort Hatteras, N. C., 51
 Fort Henry, Tenn., 90, 94
 Fort Jackson, La., 100
 Fort Lafayette, New York, 52
 Fort Pillow, Tenn., 83, 100, 114, 117, 281n.
 Fort Sumter, S. C., 102
 Fortune's Fork Plantation, xxi, 150
 Forty-eighth Miss., Regt., 167
 Fowler, Mr., 236
 Fowler, Mrs., 254
 France, xvii, 118, 148, 293; recognition of Confederacy by, 239; Gen. Polignac goes to, 278
 Frank (Francesca Carrora), Kate's maid, 9, 13, 42, 64, 67, 82-83, 90; dies, 207 and n.
Frank Leslie's Lady's Magazine, 276
 Frankfort, Ky., 13n, 374
 Franklin, La., engagement near, 194n
 Franklin, Tenn., 180 and n., 205-206, 263
 Frazer, Charles Wesley, marries Titia Austin, 94 and n.
 Frederick, Md., 142 and n., 144
 Fredericksburg, Va., 163-64, 168
 Fremont, Gen. J. C., 59 and n., 119
 French, Maj. Thomas B., 213
 Front Royal, Va., 114
 Gaddis, Mr., 190
 Gaither, Dr., 369-71, 377
 Galloway, Mr., 261
 Galt, Capt. J. A., 213 and n.
 Galveston, Tex., fall of, 155; recaptured, 169
 Gary, Mr., 311, 316, 322
 Gary, Mrs., 311, 316, 330-31, 339
 Gee, Mary, 62
 Georgia, 160n., 249, 255
 Gettysburg, Pa., 247, 265
 Gibson, Mrs. (formerly Mrs. Lane), 264-65
 Gibson, Claudy, 20
 Gibson, Willy, 351
 Giday, Capt., 342
 Gillispie, Capt., 300-301
 Given, Mr., 368
Gleason's Pictorial, 146
 Goddard, Mr., 275-76
 Goodrich, Henry, 55, 82, 371
 Goodrich, Mrs. Henry (Mona), 82, 372; death of, 373
 Goodrich's Landing, La., 22 and n., 24, 30, 47, 50-51, 66, 75, 98, 118, 122-23, 239n., 300, 370, 373; Negro troops at, 297n.
 Grand Gulf, Miss., 206 and n.
 Grant, Gen. U. S., xxi, xv, 173n, 174n., 175n., 177n., 178 and n., 203, 206n., 215-16, 227, 278, 316; assumes command and plans to bypass Vicksburg, 168n.; treatment of civilians by, 175; projects canals, 175n.; invades Mississippi, 211, 212n.; opinion of Negro soldiers, 219n.; before Richmond, Va., 284; in Georgia, 285 and n.; besieges Richmond, Va., 290
 Graves, R. W. 15n. 171-72, 179, 205
 Graves, Mrs. R. W. (Anne), 15 and n., 86, 120, 141, 181, 185, 366
 Graves, Ann, 15n.
 Graves, Emma, 15n.
 Graves, Ettie, 15n.
 Graves, Eugenia, 15n.
 Graves, John, 182
 Graves, Lamartine, 15n., 120
 Greeley, Horace, 14, 21, 205, 208
 Green, Gen. Tom, 278 and n., 279
 Green, Mol, 364
 Green, Rosa, 324, 364
 Greenville, Miss., 134, 136, 377
 Grenada, Miss., 168
 Griffin, Mr., 291
 Grissman, Mrs., 255
 Grissman, George, 251

- Grissman, Sally, 252, 255, 292, 328, 343, 354, 357
- Guerrillas, xv, 103-104, 120, 196 and n., 296, 297 and n., 298, 316
- Guisenberg, Mr., 235
- Gunboats, xii, xiii, 90, 91, 100-101, 104-105, 117, 125, 128, 142, 146, 218n, 280, 298; *Manassas* near Vicksburg, 69 and n.; before Natchez, 107; at Vicksburg, 111; at Goodrich's Landing, 122-23, *Arkansas* engages Federal fleet in Yazoo River, 133n; Federal, withdraw up Mississippi, 135 and n.; Federal reappear, 136-37n.; fired on by civilians at Omega, 140, between Omega and Young's Point, 159; Johnny prisoner on, 165-66, Federal fleet at Omega, 165 and n.; Confederate *Alabama* and *Florida* in Gulf of Mexico, 169 and n.; Federal, captured, 175-76 and n.; Federal, before Grand Gulf, 206 and n.
- Gustine, Mrs. Sophia, 36n., 104, 155, 264, 306, 366
- Gustine, Duncan, 120, 122, 140, 145, 166, 172
- Gustine Ella, 166, 264, 309
- Gustine, Lem, 56, 355
- Gustine, Mary, 36 and n., 52, 65-66, 127, 135, 155-56, 164, 166, 176, 205, 222, 238, 264, 276, 306; marriage of, 232; death of, 309
- Guyon, Capt. Louis, 374
- Hampton Roads, Va., 100, 316n.
- Hand, Mr., 325
- Hannah, Mr., 123
- Hardin, Mr., 338
- Hardison, Benjamin (planter), xxi, 21, 32, 49-51, 57, 59-60, 62, 86, 129, 133, 139, 133, 168, 171-72, 201, 218, 280, 338; home raided by Yankees, 195-97
- Hardison, Mrs. Benjamin (Mary C. R.), xxi, 15, 21-22, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33, 38, 41, 47, 49, 50, 56, 62-63, 65-66, 72, 83, 84, 106-107, 115, 124, 129, 142, 145, 151, 162, 183, 185, 195, 197, 201, 205, 218, 235; death of, 280
- Hardison, Alice, 40, 44, 64, 129
- Hardison, George, xxi, 64-65, 103, 197
- Hardison, Lou, 53, 64, 120
- Hardison, Henry, xxi, 49
- Hardison, Josn, 47
- Harper, Capt., 138, 145, 148, 163, 161, 212; death of, 230
- Harper, Mrs. Capt., 212, 230, 306
- Harper, Sophie, 212, 230, 233
- Harper's Monthly*, 14, 58n
- Harper's Weekly*, 14, 24, 270, 276
- Harper's Ferry, Va., 142 and n., 214n.
- Harris, Gen. N. H., 334-35n
- Harris, Mr., 93, 175
- Harris, Mr. Hans, 177
- Harrison, Col. Isaac F., 293n, 299 and n.
- Harrison's Brigade, xx, 295, 296, 298, 299n, 301, 316; organized, 293n.
- Hatcher's Inn, Va., 336
- Haws, Gen. J. M., 212
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel, xviii, 51
- Hayes, Gen., 346
- Haywood, Maj., 193
- Hazelitt, Mr., 80, 121, 191
- Hazelitt, Mrs., 114
- Henderson, Mr., 373
- Henderson, Mrs., 155, 373
- Hewitt, Mr., 116-17
- Hill, Gen. D. H., 167
- Hill, Col., 318, 331
- Hill, Mrs. Col., 255, 331, 337
- Hinds County, Miss., xxi, 143, 377
- Holbury, Mr., 22, 24, 60, 72, 82, 113, 147
- Holbury, Mrs., 40, 42, 80
- Holbury, Sally, 40
- Holmes, Amanda Julia, daughter of Kate Stone Holmes, xxii
- Holmes, Gen. T. H., 257n.
- Holmes, Emmet, xxi
- Holmes, Henry, 322 and n.
- Holmes, Henry Bry (Lt. Holmes), xvii, xxi, 322 and n., 328 and n., 329, 331-32, 334, 336, 338, 339, 341ff., 367; marries Kate, xvii, 367n.
- Holmes, Julia Bry, 322n.
- Holmes, Kate Bry, xxi
- Holmes, Mary Jane, xvii, xxiii, 22 and n.

- Homer, La., 142, 204, 255, 288, 337, 349, 367; Kate visits in, 293, 295, 306
- Hood, Gen. John B., 312, 313n.
- Hornwasher, Mr., 21, 24, 26-27, 30, 129, 190
- Hubler, Mr., 32
- Huey, John, 305n.
- Hull, Col., 252, 255, 294, 296
- Hull, Mrs., 252-53, 255, 266, 294, 314
- Humphreys, Col. B. G., 81
- Hunt, Dr., 261
- Hunt, Mollie, 154
- Hunter, R. M., 316n
- Indian Territory, xvi, 232; battles in, 83 and n.; Federal forts, 232n
- Inflation, price of pork, 53; cost of flour, 145, high cost of clothing, 147, brandy, cost a gallon, 159, 164; charges and rate of exchange, 194 and n.; price of carpeting, 220; price of shoes, 231; high prices, 232; price of book, 234, charge for room and board, 236, price of shoes, 240; price of wood, 255; cost of clothing, 267
- Irvine, girls, 335-36, 352, 358
- Irvine, Lizzie, 330, 338-39
- Irvine, Lt., 352
- Irvine, Neta, 328, 348, 353
- Isaacson, Maj., 292
- Island No. 10, 96 and n., 100 and n., 169
- Jackson, Miss., xv, 52n., 99, 101-103, 110, 124, 143, 212 and n., 215, 259 and n.; fall of, 211 and n.; Federal raid on, 243
- Jackson, Tenn., 99
- Jackson, Andrew, 100
- Jackson, Dr. T. M., 156, 157
- Jackson, Gen. Stonewall, 114, 118-19, 129; death of, 211f.; life of, 313
- James, Maj., 372
- Jayhawkers, 173, 175, 223, 229, 283, 345, 346
- Jeff Davis Guards, xx, 16, 20, 117
- Jeffries, Miss, 162
- Jeffries, Mr., 182
- Johnson, Andrew, 341, 352
- Johnson, Capt., 330, 331
- Johnson, Dr., 279, 283
- Johnson, Mr. Matt, 75, 205, 206, 230
- Johnson, Mrs. Matt, 75, 147, 173
- Johnson, Mrs. Narcisse, 134-35
- Johnston, Gen. Joseph, 92-93, 179, 211 and n., 229, 285 and n., 313; rumors of surrender, 333; rumor of last stand, 335; surrender of, 335n., 340
- Johnstone, Capt. William H., 160
- Johnstone, Mrs. William H., 142-43, 149-50, 159-61
- Journal*, manuscript of, vii; entries in, vii; Kate's introduction to, vii; editing of, vii; notes to, viii; characterization of Kate in, xviii; importance of, xix
- Journal of Commerce*, 14
- Kaiser, Albert A., xxi, 21, 26-27, 30, 49, 56, 79, 80, 92, 249-51, 254, 365
- Kanawha Valley, 142 and n.
- Kansas, 173, 253n.
- Keene, family, 372
- Keene, Mrs., 107; Mrs. Bowdin, 369
- Keene, Mary, 372
- Kennedy, Mr., 362
- Kennedy, Mrs., 362
- Kentucky, xii, 98, 146, 174, 281
- King, Capt., 268, 272, 275, 276, 279
- Knoxville, Tenn., 117
- Kunckers, Dr., 332-33
- Kup, Capt., 47-48
- Kurrie, Mr., 301
- Lake, Mr., 63
- Lake Providence, La., 51, 80, 128, 130, 136; Federal troops at, 168n., 175 and n.; Negroes in Federal camp at, 176; levee at, 184; Negroes camped at, 184
- Lake Providence Cadets, 15
- Lake Washington, Miss., 134, 140
- Lamb, Charles, xviii, 355 and n.
- Lamar County, Tex., 225, 228, 29, 231, 232n., 233, 235, 238, 240, 241ff., 247, 254, 285, 351, 359; opinion of, 223 and n.; people in, 227; Stones return to, 361-62
- Lawrence, Dr., 255, 258, 275

- Lawrence, Mrs., 267, 269-70, 273, 279, 328, 332, 343, 360
- Lawrence, Lela, 288
- Lea, Capt Joseph C., 296, 297 and n.
- Lee, Gen Robert E., xvii, xviii, 129 and n., 214n., 227, 230, 253, 316, 340n., in Virginia, 233; before Richmond, 284; at Richmond, 290; surrender of, 331 and n., 333; surrender terms, 335n.; troops surrendered, 336
- Lee, Miss Kitty, 140
- Leesburg, Va., 69, 71, 81, 102
- Lena Rivers*, 22
- Levees, 15n., 16, 22, 47, 67, 103 104, 106, 108-109, 111-12, 125 and n., 171, 184, 190, 218n.
- Levy, Mr., 268
- Levy, Mrs., 253, 256, 266, 270, 283, 342, 344, 352 53, 357-58
- Levy, Edward, 251
- Levy, Lionel, 352, 354, 357 58
- Lexington, Mo., 57 and n.
- Lexington, Va., 170
- Ligruski, Mrs., 344
- Ligruski, Charlie, 327
- Lily, Dr., 43, 51, 56, 58, 60, 62 64, 72, 78 79, 82, 84, 88, 97, 113, 119
- Lily, Mrs., *see* Rose Norris
- Lily, Miss Patience, 89, 97
- Lincoln, Abraham, 14, 19, 36n., 37, 39, 59n., 146, 316n., 341 and n.; effect of election, 101; preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, 145 and n.; Emancipation Proclamation, 148; reported as dictator, 180; rumor of death, 333 and n.
- Littell's Living Age*, 14, 16 and n., 24
- Little, Maj., 236
- Little Rock, Ark., 121, 255; fall of, 242n.
- Longstreet, Gen. James, 233
- Looney, Morgan H., 255n.
- Lord, Mr., 92
- Louisiana, xi, xii, xv, xvii, 10n., 83, 92n., 103, 105, 111, 116, 125n., 168, 222, 227, 232, 239, 241, 244, 249, 265, 266, 278 and n., 290, 295n., 299, 297n., 306, 317, 319, 342, 346, 339n., 342, 347, 350n., 361, 362; eulogy to, 100; honor of, 174; part of Trans-Mississippi Department, 207n.; rumors of readmission, 239; Quantrell in, 253n., refugees from, 330, troops in, refuse to surrender, 335-36, governor of, at surrender conference, 343n.
- Louisville, Ky., 146
- Lovell, Gen. Mansfield, 244
- L'Overture, Toussaint, 313 and n., 314
- Lowry, family, 192, 205 206, 307
- Lowry, Alfred J., 52n., 175
- Lowry, Mrs. A. J., 204
- Lowry, Al. 52, 135 37, 140 41, 355
- Lowry, Carrie (Caroline), 52, 149, 152, 162, 206-207, 214, 218, 272, 277, 322 23
- Lowry, Frank, 135 36, 140
- Lowry, Olivia, 206
- Lucas, Mr., 151
- Lynchburg, Va., 265, 318, 340
- McClay, Maj. & Mrs. R. P., 213
- McCardle, Maj., 101 102
- McClellan, Gen. George B., 59 and n., 115 and n., 119, 129, 131 32
- McClelland, Gen. J. A., 177n., 186n.
- McConnell, Mr., 372
- McCulloch, Gen. Henry E., 214n.; at Bonham, Tex., 244n.; arrests Quantrell, 258n.
- McGee, Mr., 21, 25, 120, 122, 146, 163, 270
- McGleason, Mr., 225, 233
- McGraw, Sally, 303 304
- McGregor, Dr., 270, 283, 292 93, 306 307, 315, 330, 334, 342 43, 345, 348, 352 53, 356
- McGregor, Mr., 43 44, 279
- McIntosh, Col. D. N., 83 and n.
- McIntosh, Mrs. Gen., 107
- McIntosh, Mrs. Gen., 107
- McIntyre, Miss, 354
- McNairy, Sue, 107
- McNeely, Mr., 82, 84 85, 95, 113, 120
- McNeils, Col., 294
- McPherson, Mr., 179, 183, 196 97
- McRae, Mr. M. H., 23, 40, 49, 53, 59, 61 62, 68, 78, 113, 127, 136 37, 147, 152, 155 56

- Nailor, Dr., 248
 Nailor, Frank, 20, 47, 62
 Nailor, Kate, 17, 20, 24, 28, 30, 44,
 47-48, 50, 63, 71, 81, 93, 105, 111-
 12, 118, 163, 248, 258, 350, 351;
 dies, 276
 Nashville, Tenn., 37 and n., 90ff, 96,
 104-105, 116, defeat of Gen Hood
 at, 313n
 Nashville Female Academy, 3, 37n.,
 90 and n
 Natchez, Miss, xiii, 39, 65, 111, 115,
 168n, 174n.; surrender, 107 and n.
 Natchitoches, La, 278n
 Negroes, xv; freed, return to La, xviii,
 363, freedmen demand high wages,
 368, die of cholera, 372; *see also*
 Slaves
 Neil, Lt., 326
 Neily, Mr John, 92, 138, 140
 New Carthage, La, 174 and n, 176,
 186n, 217n; proposed canal at,
 168n.
 New York, 54, 269, 276n
New York News, 317
New York Tribune, 14 and n, 176n.,
 205
 New York 22nd Cavalry, 308
 New Orleans, La., xi, xii, 13ff, 43,
 52n., 53-54, 59, 66, 84, 89, 103-
 105, 107, 109, 111, 115, 144, 151,
 173, 253, 268, 279, 315, 321n, 343n,
 351, 353, 357, 361n, 366, 368, 377;
 fall of, 100 and n.; Mumford inci-
 dent, 126
 Newman, family, 372
 Newman, George R., 25n, 69, 122-
 23, 132, 162
 Newman, Mrs. George R. (Ann), 25
 and n., 80, 269, 293, 296, 314
 Newman, Annie, 124
 Newman, George, 25n.
 Newman, Lizzie, 25n., 124
 Newman, Sally, 376
 Newman, Walter, 25 and n.
 Newton, Albert B, xx, 3, 11, 13-14,
 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25-27, 29, 31,
 35, 42-45, 56, 62; dies, 264
 Newton, Mrs., 139, 147, 306, 353
 Newton, Celeste, 22
 Newton, George, 45
 Nicholson, Anna (Annie), xxi, 26, 58-
 59, 61, 271, 286, 310
 Noland, Mr Joe, 125, 177, 182
 Nolley, Lt., 164
 Norfolk, Va., 106
 Norris, family, 85
 Norris, Mr., 89
 Norris, Mrs 89, 291
 Norris, Emily, xxi, 26, 59, 78, 117,
 123, 151, 153-54, 271, 280, 283,
 286ff, 306-307, 325, 372
 Norris, Lambert, 161
 Norris, Robert, 21, 25-27, 47, 49, 65,
 67, 72, 74-75, 78, 80, 93ff, 117, 119,
 123-24, 128, 131-32, 248, 257, 264
 Norris, Rose (Mrs. Lily), 67, 80-81,
 84, 88-89, 93, 97, 332, 338-39
 Norris, Thekla, 59, 64, 82, 307
 Nutt, Dr., 127
 Nutt, Mrs., 140, 142, 175, 370
 Nutt, Miss, 142
 Oak Ridge, La., 300, 322, 364; Kate
 visits near, 293 and n.; Confederate
 troops at, 294
 Oath of Allegiance, 105, 126, 175 and
 n., 181, 349
 Occoquan Creek, Va., 68
 Omega Landing, La., xv, 14 and n.,
 19, 35, 44-45, 53, 67, 70, 82, 91,
 107, 123, 125, 127-28, 138, 142, 151,
 164, 176, 181; Federal gunboats at,
 130; shelled, 140; Federal gunboats
 at, 159; Federal fleet at, 165; Federal
 headquarters at, 178
 Orr, Miss, 52
 Ouachita River, 169, 188, 192, 193n.,
 205n., 297, 304, 305n., 322n.; pro-
 posed bypass, 168n.
 Overseer, position and duties, 5-6;
 wife of, 15
 Owen, Mrs, 61, 187
 Owens, Mr. 22
 Oxford, Miss., 186
 P., Dr., 249
 Paducah, Ky., 105, 281n.
 Pargoud, Col. J. Frank, 148 and n.,
 155, 169

- Parsons, Col. M. M., 296 and n.
 "Paul Vane," 301 and n
 Payne, Mrs., 133, 139, 149, 151-52, 277, 281, 283-84
 Pecan Grove, La., 108, 114-15, 128, 184
 Peck, Mr. W. P., 14, 35, 36n, 58
 Pemberton, Gen. John C., 211 and n., 244; surrender of Vicksburg, 229n.
 Pennsylvania, 227, 233, 243
 Perrit Guards, 17
 Peters, Mr., 349
 Petersburg, Va., 341
 Philadelphia, Pa., 138, 151; rumor of capture, 230
 Philips, Mr., 297
Picayune, 14, 35, 88, 321n.
 Pierson, Mr., 351, 353, 357
Pierson's Magazine, 328
 Pin Hook, La., Yankee raid on, 297
 Pine Bluff, Ark., xvi, 74, 75, 207n., 301
 Pleasant Hill, La., 278n., 280; battle of, xvi
 Poe, Edgar Allan, xviii, 14, 29
 Polignac, Gen. Camille de, at battle of Mansfield, La., 278 and n.
 Polk, Carrie, *see* Carrie Lowry
 Polk, Col., 277
 Polk, Gen. Leonidas, 83
 Polk, Lt., 143
 Polys, Capt., 329, 331, 335, 339
 Polys, Mrs. Capt., 325
 Pope, Gen. John, 342; requests Gen. Kirby Smith's surrender, 340 and n.
 Port Gibson, Miss., 211
 Port Hudson, La., 194n.; surrender of, 229 and n.
 Port Royal, S. C., 71
 Porter, Capt., 374
 Potomac River, 118, 144, 146-47, 149
 Powell, Lewis, 33n.
 Prentice, Mr., 253, 266; dies, 264
 Prentice, Mrs., 252-53, 255, 264, 266, 285, 287-89, 292, 320, 325, 329, 334, 344, 350, 373
 Prentice, Horace, 285
 Preston, Gen. William B., 343n.
 Price, Gen. Sterling, 242n., 277, 290n.
 Price, Martin, 328
 Prisoners, Confederate, captured at Milliken's Bend, 137 and n.; expected exchange at Vicksburg, 141; exchanges arrive in Vicksburg, 143 and n.; Yankees at Vicksburg, 150, civilians taken, 166; at Vicksburg, 229; at Camp Ford, 257, 283, 279; destitute condition, 290; paroles expected, 334
 Pritchard, Capt., 317
 Proctor, Mrs., 219
 Pugh, Florence (Mrs. Morrison), 206
 Purvis, Maj., 299
 Quantrill, W. C., in Texas, 253 and n.
 Quays, Amy, 325-26, 328
Queen of the West, 133n., 176n.
 Ragan, family, 31
 Ragan, Ashburn, xx, 3, 15ff., 28ff., 43ff., 63ff., 70, 77, 80, 84, 86, 116, 156, 240, 262; dies, 68-69; character of, 69; memory of, 130
 Ragan, Bohanan (Uncle Bo), xii, xx, 3, 13ff., 19, 20, 26, 30-31, 35, 39, 44, 47, 56, 61, 71-72, 81, 85, 86, 88, 102, 106, 114-15, 119, 129, 133, 145, 147, 149, 159, 163, 168, 189, 217, 243, 263, 303, 334, 343-44, 346, 352, 368, 370, 377; leaves for Virginia, 17; promoted, 248; wounded, 254; promoted to Capt., 265; convalescing, 281
 Ragan, Elam, 144
 Ragan, Elise, 307, 344, 361, 363, 365
 Ragan, Kate Boone (Mrs. John Ragan), 75, 244ff., 277, 284, 307, 311, 316, 320, 334, 338, 344, 354, 360, 363; marries, 74; arrives in Texas, 242
 Ragan, John, Sr. (Other Pa), 54-55, 70, 74, 77ff., 84, 147, 156-57, 282, 364
 Ragan, Mrs. John, Sr. (Other Ma), 75
 Ragan, John (Uncle Johnny), 43, 49, 80, 147, 167, 243ff., 255, 277, 284, 307, 311, 316, 322, 344, 354, 360, 363; marries, 74; arrives in Texas, 242;

- returns to Tyler from Austin, 282;
goes to Austin, 356, returns, 357
- Ragan, Sarah Louise (Sally), 157, 242,
284, 289, 307, 317, 344, 354, 361,
363
- Raids, fear of, 119, Negroes taken
from plantations, 127-28, 175;
Yankees rob Mr Newman, 132;
Yankees expected, 148; railroad de-
stroyed to Delhi, 365, on Buckhorn,
165-66, Yankees at Dr. Devine's,
172, Yankee parties in swamp,
174; Yankees seek cotton, 178;
expected at Brokenburn, 179, raiding
party passes Brokenburn, 179;
Brokenburn visited, 181; Yankees
take Wonka, 182-83; by soldiers and
Negroes, 184; Hardison's home
sacked, 195-97; cutting off supplies,
204, by Yankees at Cooper's Well,
Miss., 243, reported, 296, at Floyd
and Pin Hook, La., 297, 298; danger
past, 300; reports of, 301; Yankees
at Monroe, 320
- Railroad, xiv, xv; Vicksburg, Shreve-
port and Texas, 47; to Jackson,
Miss., 101, 103; Vicksburg, Shreve-
port and Texas, 103-104; Vicksburg,
Shreveport and Texas, bridges
burned, tracks destroyed, 165 and n.;
Stones ride from Delhi to Monroe,
192; Monroe to Delhi, 219; Houston
and Texas Central, 288n.
- Randall, Col Horace, 214 and n.
- Randall, Maj., 292
- Rapidan River, 277
- Raymond, Miss., 211
- Reading, Mr. R. G., 22n., 52, 69-70
- Reading, Mrs. R. G., 22 and n., 50,
52, 64-65, 91
- Reading, Jenny, 65
- Reading, Sally, 65
- Red River, xvi, 194n., 239n.; bypass
route, 168n.; *Queen of the West*
captured in, 176 and n.; campaign
of, 278n; Federal fleet in, 280n.;
skirmishes on, 286
- Reed, Julia, 22, 30, 44, 52, 55-56, 64-
66, 77ff, 85, 88, 91, 106, 112, 115-
16, 118ff, 130, 134ff., 139, 141-42,
145, 149, 152, 156, 176, 205, 238,
247-48, 266, 275, 277, 281ff, 293,
303, 307, 322-23
- Refugees, 250, 255, 267, 291, 293, 294;
river planters move to hills, 139,
at Delhi, 191; on cars at Monroe,
192, bound for Texas, 194; at Tren-
ton, La., 204, 215; attitude toward,
at Tyler, 238
- Reigart, Mr., 296, 374
- Rhett, Maj., 346
- Rhodes, Mr., 186
- Rhotan, Mr., 372, 373
- Richards, George S., 16n, 23, 40, 65,
130, 195-97, 315
- Richards, Keene, 173
- Richards, Mrs Keene, 369, 372
- Richards, Mary, 154
- Richards, Sarah, 16n.
- Richards, Sue, 121
- Richardson, Judge N., 208, 288, 367
- Richardson, Miss. Napitandi, 181, 206,
211, 279-80, 287-88, 367
- Richardson, Mr A., 63, 181
- Richardson, Miss W., 181
- Richmond, Ky., 142 and n.
- Richmond, La., xvi, 15 and n., 38n.,
57, 89, 127, 150n., 173, 186n., 217n.,
218 and n., 365
- Richmond, Va., 16, 26, 30, 35, 41, 44-
45, 56, 115n., 116, 119, 129n., 146,
167, 215-16, 278, 308; Uncle Johnny
at, 243; besieged, 290; surrender of,
331; retreat from, 333
- Ricks, Ben, 102
- Roach, Wilkins, 105
- Roach, Mrs. Wilkins, *see* Kate Nailor
- Roane, Gen. J. Selden, calls on Stones,
267 and n.
- Roane, Mrs. J. Selden, 283, 333, 358
- Roanoke Island, N.C., 90, 94
- Robert, Eliza, 331
- Roberts, Janie, 320, 328
- Rodney, La., 107
- Rosecrans, Gen. W. S., 59 and n.,
253
- Ross, Gen. L. S., raids in Miss., 281n.
- Rossman, Mrs., 20, 40, 144, 351
- Rossman, Eugenia, 144, 264, 323, 351
- Roundaway Bayou, La., 38n., 150n.;
proposed canal into, 168n.
- Rucker, Mr., 175

- Rutherford, Mr., 98, 99
 Rutherford, Mrs., 98
- Salt works, 170, 175, 194, 200, 205, 207; slaves at, 204
- San Antonio, Tex., 280, 318, shipping cotton to, 326
- Sandford, Molhe, 328, 334, 336
- Santa Rosa Island, Fla., 60 and n.
- Saunders, Dr., 160, 161
- Saunders, Mrs., *see* Jenny Austin
- Savage, Mrs. Elizabeth, xix, xxi, 21, 24ff., 30, 41, 58-59, 61, 63, 67, 69, 73-74, 77-78, 80ff., 85, 89, 93, 97-98, 101, 107, 118-19, 122-123, 131, 136, 138, 141, 145, 148, 151, 153, 161, 249, 266, 274-75, 280-81, 284, 286, 290ff., 297, 306-307, 311, 315, 320, 325, 327, 329, 330, 334, 336ff., 342, 244-45, 350, 356
- Savannah, Ga., 144-45, 312, 367
- Sawyer, Charles Carroll, 323n.
- Scarborough, Mrs., 211
- Scarborough, Tabitha, 51, 215
- Schools, 37, 50, 54, 69, 71, 79, 80, 82, 84-85, 89, 109, 121, 131, 170, 271, 273-74, 284, 286, 316, 325, 344; tutors, xi; need of teacher, 58; arrival of Mr. Wilkinson, 70; Wilkinson's first attempt teaching, 71; Wilkinson's failure, 73; tutor's salary, 75; effect on Johnny, 87; starts under Stenckrath, 90; Stockton arrives, 91; position sought for Mr. Stockton, 92-93; at Clinton, Miss., 186; Paradise, 225; Liberty, 234; disturbance at Tyler, 249, 51, 252, 254; Kaiser opens new school, 251-55; Kate teaches Emily French, 287; Uncle Johnny's, 357; near Clinton, Miss., 368
- Schultz, Mrs., *see* Lou West
- Scott, Mr., 173
- Scott, Mrs., 80, 166, 366
- Scott, Mrs. Mary J., 41
- Scott, Mrs. Tom, 240
- Scott, Mrs. W., 79, 206
- Scott, Amelia, 41 and n., 54, 240, 264, 268, 366
- Scott, Charley, 51, 120, 132, 140, 141, 268; dies, 264
- Scott, Gen. Winfield, 44
- Scott, Thomas, 41n.
- Seale, Mrs., 217, 304, 367
- Seale, Lucy, 217, 304-305
- Seaton, Mr., 356
- Sebastian, Mr. Tip, 52, 140
- Second Brigade, Texas Volunteer Infantry, 214n
- Second Mississippi Battalion, 121
- Second Regt., Virginia troops, 213n.
- Selma, Ala., 309
- Selser, Mr., 62, 119
- Selser, Eugene, dies, 144
- Serena, Aunt, 34
- Seven Days, battle of, 132 and n.
- Seward, W. H., 316n., 333 and n.
- Shakespeare, William, xviii, 270, 289, 365; copy of, at \$14, 234
- Sharpsburg, Md., 144-46, 167, 214n.
- Shelby, Gen. Joseph, 343n.; refuses to surrender, 336n.; escapes to Mexico, 336n.
- Shepard, Col. Isaac J., 297n.
- Sherman, Gen. William T., xiii, xv, 168n., 177n., 312, 352; lands at Milliken's Bend, 165n.; reported death, 327
- Shields, Gen. James, 119
- Shiloh, Tenn., 100 and n., 101, 169 and n.
- Shortages, xii; of garden seed, 18; of food and clothing, substitutes for, 109, 10; of food, 128; of flour, 143; of clothing, 147 and n.; substitutes for beverages and shoes, 180, 181 and n.; of quinine, 185 and n.; of clothes, 189; of provisions in Mississippi, 206; of food, 258, 59; of food and clothing, 290 and n.; of flour, 318; homemade candles, 318; substitutes for ink and shoe blacking, 332 and n.; of clothes, 347
- Shreveport, La., 208, 212, 222n., 240, 41, 256, 257n., 262, 264ff., 269, 273, 277n., 278n., 280n., 282, 83, 294, 304, 305n., 324, 335, 336n., 340n., 343, 352, 53, 363, 66, 370; Headquarters of Trans-Mississippi Dept., at, 257n.; threatened by Federals, 278 and n.; surrender of troops at, 342n.; demoralization at, 346 and n.

- Sickness, 42, 46, 55; scarlet fever and chills, 24; scarlet fever and dropsy, 31; chills and fever (swamp fever), 33, 37, 39-40, 48-49 and n., 51, 57, 59, 63ff, 126, 128, 132-33, 287; whooping cough, 53, 54; spasms, 60; typhoid fever, 62; diphtheria, 83; neuralgia, 87-88; colds, 92, 127; mumps, 123; pneumonia, 156 and n., 207, 252, 264; pneumonia and treatment of, 156-59, 160, 161, 162; inflamed eyes, 168, 254 and n.; among Yankee prisoners, 173n., 174n.; leprosy, 239; in Tyler, 233; toothache, 305; measles, 310; sore throat, 323; cholera, 372; yellow fever, 373
- Sigel, Gen. Franz, 93
- Simple, Nannie, 304
- Skipwith's Landing, Miss., 134
- Slaughter, Mrs., 235, 240
- Slaughter, Belle, 241
- Slaves, xi, xii, xiv, xvi, xviii; xix; living and working conditions of, 4-5; traders of, 5; children of, 6; provisions and clothing for, 6, 7, 152; house servants, 8-11, 78, 179 and n., 337-38; sickness of, 21, 24, 42, 43-44, 107, 130, 173 and n.; birth of, 21, 38, 59; runaways, 28, 35, 88, 170-71, 179, 183, 204; death, 31, 45, 46, 87, 126, 128, 146, 176, 180, 204, 207, 224, 272, 337, 356; demoralization of, 33, 35, 175, 202; music and dancing of, 33, 38; anticipated uprising of, 37; holidays for, 38, 77, 127; religious instruction of, 41; concern for and care of, 46; stealing of, 53; passes for, 75 and n.; division of families of, 84, 86; with Brother Walter, 187; left at Brokenburn, 314n.; health of, 226 and n., 235; care of by Dr. Carson, 236; Texans eager to hire, 242; light duties in Texas, 259, 294; loyalty of, 298; to be freed, 335; peaceful, 351; insubordinate as freedmen, 362; desire to return to Louisiana, 362; number returned to Louisiana, 363
- Slaves, in war, body servants, 11, 207n., 312; work on fortifications, 83, work on levees, 106, 125 and n.; instructed to run from Federals, 125, taken by Federals, 125, 127-28; sent to back country, 127; return from Federals, 134; sent to Bayou Macon, 137; return from Bayou Macon, 138; escape to Federals, 138; preliminary Emancipation Proclamation freeing, 145 and n.; moved inland, 169; moved to Delhi, La., 170; taken to salt works, 170; taken by Federals, 175; refuse to go with Federals, 183; looting by, 184, 193, 195-96, 212; abuse of owners by, 185, 195, 205; moved away from Federal lines, 188; flee with Stones, 191; hold whites hostage, 196; armed, 202; at salt works, 204, 205; run out of Federal lines, 207, 209-10; lured by Federals, 208; buy provisions from Federals, 210; killed in battle, 216; as soldiers, 218; fighting ability as soldiers, 219 and n.; saved from capture, 243; pride in military service, 287
- Slicer, Dr., 126, 132, 141, 142
- Smith County, Tex., 249n.
- Smith, Betty, 319
- Smith, Capt., 267-68, 275, 283, 324, 327, 352, 358
- Smith, Capt. W. A., 213 and n.
- Smith, Capt 209-10
- Smith, Dr. Jim, 140, 312
- Smith, Florence, 328
- Smith, Gen., 150
- Smith, Gen., 231, 241-42, 353
- Smith, Gen. A. J., lands Federal troops at Milliken's Bend, 165n.; in command, 178n.
- Smith, Gen. Edmund Kirby, 277, 280n., 342n., 343n.; commands Trans-Mississippi Dept., with headquarters in Shreveport, 256, 257n.; visited by Mrs. Stone, 256; order signed by, 283; to be deposed, 336n.; delays surrender, 340n.; urges resistance, 340n.; surrenders, 343n.; conference at Marshall, Texas, 343n.; reported robbed, 346

- Smith, Gen M. L. commands Federal troops at Milliken's Bend, 178n
- Smith, Mr., 154, 311, 325
- Smith, Mr., 207, 214, 226, 228, 231, 233, 241-42, 245, 256-57, 264, 273, 286, 326, 332, 353, 362
- Smith, Mrs., 227, 231, 235, 238, 241, 244, 361ff
- Snodgrass, Mr., 41
- Somerville, Lt., 267, 268
- South Carolina, 71n, 101, 102
- Southern Illustrated News*, 248n.
- Southerns', Co B, 48
- Spain, Mrs., 181
- Spamm, Miss, 57
- Sprague, Col J T., 342n.
- Springer, Miss, 51
- Spring Bank, La., 350
- Springfield, Mo., 49, 50 and n.
- Squires, Maj., 342
- St. Clair, Capt., 351
- St. Clair, Mrs., 318, 353
- St. Louis, Mo., 32, 59n., 252, 266, 294
- St. Joseph, La., 80
- St. Mary, La., salt works at, 194
- Stacey, Misses, 210
- Stark, Col., regiment of, 101 102, 205
- Steele, Gen. Frederick, 280 and n., 281, 284; commands Federal troops at Milliken's Bend, 178n.
- Stenckrath, Mr., 89, 90 93, 96, 98, 118, 152
- Stephens, A. H., 316n.
- Stevens, Mrs., 175, 184
- Stewart, Dr., 294
- Stockton, Mr., 85, 91 93, 103, 138, 140ff.
- Stokes, Mr., 117
- Stone, Amada Susan Ragan (Mamma), xi, xiv, xvi, xvii, xviii, 3, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20ff., 26, 29ff., 47, 50, 52ff., 61, 63 64, 67ff., 77ff., 94, 97, 99, 101, 103-104, 106, 109, 115 16, 118-19, 122, 125, 129, 131, 133 35, 137, 139-41, 144 46, 149-50, 153, 157 59, 161-62, 165, 169ff., 179, 182, 189 and n., 191ff., 199ff., 210, 212, 214, 216, 218 19, 220 21, 223ff., 232ff., 237, 239ff., 248ff., 257 59, 262, 264ff., 272ff., 281-82, 285 86, 290ff., 296, 299-301, 303, 306-308, 310-12, 314ff., 335ff., 341ff., 347, 350ff., 355ff., 372-73, 376 77; biography of, xx; clothing slaves, 7; protection of slaves, 8; religious instruction of slaves, 11; sick, 60; character and girlhood of, 70, sick, 126, 128, 132, to Vicksburg, 155; returns from Vicksburg, 156, discharges overseer, 163; visits Tyler, 230; pleads release of overseer from military service, 231; visits Shreveport, 256; applies for My Brother's transfer, 273; read popular novels, 326; reads Shakespeare, 365; visits in Vicksburg, 375
- Stone, Amanda R. (Little Sister), xiv, 4, 11, 14, 23, 25, 27, 30, 37, 40, 40ff., 57 59, 63 64, 72, 80-82, 84, 86 88, 90, 106, 115, 120 21, 126-27, 129, 133 34, 140-41, 145, 153, 155, 162, 179, 185, 188, 189n., 191, 193-94, 196, 200, 203, 206 207, 212, 216, 230, 233, 236, 244 45, 254, 256, 273, 275, 277, 286, 289, 310 11, 316 17, 331, 342 43, 354 55, 359, 361 62, 364 65, 376, 377; biography of, xx
- Stone, Coleman (Brother Coley), xii, 3, 18, 20ff., 26, 36, 40, 42, 44ff., 51, 53, 55ff., 63 64, 67, 69ff., 78, 80, 82 83, 87, 92 93, 95, 96, 98 99, 102, 107, 112, 117, 119 20, 124 25, 131, 134 36, 140, 144, 149, 155, 174, 186, 189, 194, 206, 217, 232, 248, 256, 258; death of, xvi, 259; joins army, 94; ill, 139; letter reporting death of, 259 62; character of, 262 63; injured, 263
- Stone, James A. (Jimmy), xiv, 13, 18, 21, 23 24, 33, 38, 45, 48, 49, 51ff., 58 59, 63 65, 67, 79-80, 106, 112, 114 16, 121, 127, 130, 132, 137, 142, 146 47, 152-53, 155, 160, 161 62, 164, 170 71, 175, 189n., 191 93, 197, 198 and n., 200, 202, 206 207, 209-10, 220, 224, 226, 228, 232, 236, 239, 247, 250, 251ff., 257 58, 264, 267, 270 71, 274, 277, 279 80, 282ff., 287ff., 294 96, 298 99, 301,

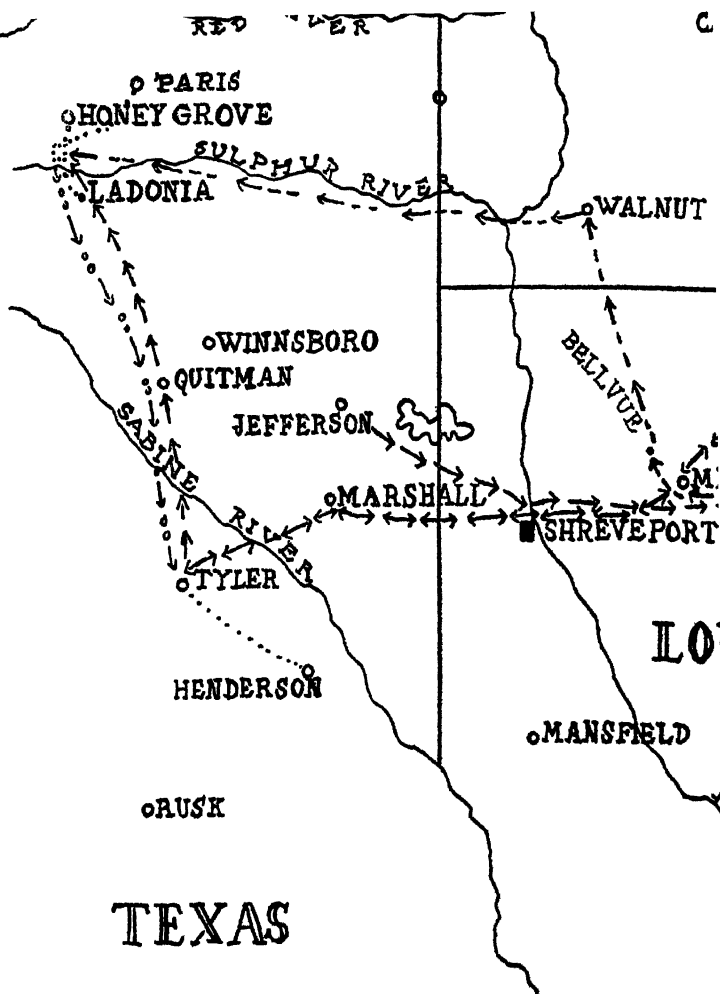
- 304, 308, 310, 312, 314-16, 321, 323, 325, 334, 347-49, 351, 353, 358, 360ff, 365, 368, 376, biography of, xx; has pneumonia, 156-59; goes to Navasota, Tex., 228; returns from Navasota, 240; joins army, 293 and n.; birthday of, 303; letters from, 320, 337; returns home, 346; studies medicine, 370, quits medical school, 375
- Stone, John B (Johnny), xiv, 19, 20-21, 24, 28, 30, 45, 47, 49-51, 53-54, 57, 60, 62ff, 67, 75, 79-80, 87, 116, 120-21, 129, 134, 137, 141, 153, 155, 162, 164, 170-71, 173ff, 183-85, 189n, 191, 193, 198 and n., 199-201, 204, 214, 217, 219-20, 233, 235-36, 244-45, 248ff, 254, 256-57, 264, 268, 270-72, 277, 285ff, 292, 300-301, 303-305, 307-308, 311, 316, 318-19, 325, 327, 330-31, 333, 335, 337-38, 346ff, 357-59, 362, 364, 375-76; biography of, xx; taken prisoner, 165, experiences as prisoner, 166; trip to Monroe, 238; returns from Monroe, 247; reads Shakespeare, 365; trouble with Negro ex-soldier, 368; sent away, 368; in school at Clinton, Miss., 368; in school at Oxford, Miss., 371
- Stone, Sarah Katherine (Kate), age of, xi; begins *Journal*, xi; attitudes of, xii; on shortages, xiii; has Christmas party, xiii; on beginning of Vicksburg siege, xiii; reports Federal foraging, xiii, on terror of civilians, xiii; Federals seize favorite horse of, xiv; anxious for loved ones, xiv; menaced by armed slaves, xiv; flees from Brokenburn, xiv; in peril, xiv; reaches Delhi, La., xiv; temporary refuge of, at Monroe La., xv; arrives in Texas, xvi; moves to Tyler, xvi; on Yankee prisoners, xvi; praises Southern strategy, xvii; meets Lt. Holmes, xvii; returns to Louisiana, xvii; marries Henry Bry Holmes, xviii; authors read by, xviii; as diarist, xviii; importance of *Journal* of, xix; biography of, xxi-xxii; ancestry of, 7; on slavery, 7-8; begins *Journal*, 11-12; on Horace Greeley, 14; bids of farewell to brother and uncle, 17; on secession, 19; prays for Cause, 25; studies French, 29; reads Poe, 29; reads Scott, 33; on own childhood, 34-35; describes self, 35; patriotism of, 36; returns from Vicksburg, 46; studies Spanish, 48; reads Hawthorne, 51; mourns Ashburn, 68; comments on Uncle Johnny, 75; observes twenty-first birthday, 79; reads Bulwer-Lytton, 82; sympathizes with slaves, 84; patriotism of, 85; on Sir Walter Scott, 87; protests inaction, 87; reads Jeremy Taylor, 88; describes burning of cotton, 100-101; flees from Vicksburg, 103-104; on shortages, 109-10; praises Southerners, 110; sees first Federal gunboat, 122-23; worries about soldier brother, 133-34; reports rumors of Federal raids, 137; reads Bulwer-Lytton, 138; visits in Vicksburg, 142; on Lincoln, 146; learns to weave, 146; reads Thackeray, 148; prepares to flee from Yankees, 169; concerned for runaway slaves, 171; on Gen. Grant, 175; expects Federal attack, 179; loses favorite horse, 182-83; defies Yankee soldier, 182; describes civilian conditions, 184 and n.; describes fleeing civilians, 191; held prisoner by armed slaves, 195-97; flees from Brokenburn, 197ff.; locates near Monroe, La., 203; reads Keats, 206; on death of Stonewall Jackson, 211; meets Gen. Walker's staff, 213-14; on journey to Texas, 220-23; on Texans, 223-27; rents books, 233-34; describes Texas, 234-39; moves to Tyler, 249; describes difficulties of refugees, 249-51; reads Washington Irving, 256; mourns death of Brother Coley, 262-63; celebrates Christmas, 269; observes twenty-third birthday, 272; reports battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill, La., 277ff.; visits Yankee prison camp, 283; tutors

- French, 287; visits Rusk, Texas, 288; attends Masonic celebration, 292; returns to Louisiana on visit, 293; returns to Texas, 304-306; reports peace rumors, 316; meets Mollie E. Moore (Davis), 321; meets Lt. Holmes, 322; reports rumors of Lee's surrender, 330-31; reads Goethe's *Faust*, 332, on Lincoln's assassination, 333, confirms Lee's surrender, 333-34; despairs of defeat, 334; on rumors of her engagement, 338; is bitter about defeat, 339-40; on conditions in Trans-Mississippi Dept., 340-41; describes reaction to defeat, 340-42; disagrees with Lt. Holmes on matrimony, 344, 345-46; says good-bye to Lt. Holmes, 347-48; reports My Brother's return, 348-49; reports arrival of Federal troops in Tyler, 351; leaves Tyler, 359; returns to Lamar County, 361; describes destitute condition of Stones, 362-63; arrives at Brokenburn, 364; describes return trip from Texas, 366-67; sees Lt. Holmes, 367; visits New Orleans, 368; on conditions after the war, 368-69; moves to Wilton Plantation, 371; determines to be more appreciative in the future, 378
- Stone, Walter F. (Brother Walter), xii, xv, 16, 19-21, 24, 38, 41, 43, 45, 49, 55, 57, 59, 60, 61, 64, 69, 70, 73, 79, 80, 82, 84, 87-88, 93, 99, 103, 104, 107-108, 111, 13, 115, 16, 120, 124ff., 132, 134-35, 137, 139, 40, 145-46, 149, 155, 168, 180, 189, 230, 256, 262, 319, 340; death of xv, 186-88; leaving for army, 143, 44; joins army, 150; bravery of, 263
- Stone, William Patrick (Father), xx, 34, 35, 58, 70
- Stone, William R. (My Brother), xii, xviii, 3, 11, 18ff., 26, 28, 30, 34, 39, 41-42, 44-45, 47, 50, 52ff., 59-61, 63, 64, 66, 69, 71, 81, 85, 90, 102, 105, 106, 111, 12, 114ff., 119, 121, 125, 129, 133, 135, 137, 141, 145ff., 152, 154-55, 163, 168, 172, 176, 178, 186, 189, 215-17, 243, 248, 256, 264-65, 272, 276-77, 281, 284, 290, 291, 308, 315, 317, 322-23, 334, 336, 341, 343-44, 346-47, 350-51, 355, 357-58, 360, 362, 370-71, 373-74, 375, 376-77; biography of, xx; prepares to join army, 13; joins Jeff Davis Guards, 16; leaves for Virginia, 17; home on sick furlough, 62; returns to regiment, 68; news of, 134; wounded, 144; promoted, 159; reported killed, 164; returns on furlough, 167; wounds of, 167; moves slaves inland, 170; returns to Virginia, 174; burns cotton, 177; reported wounded, 247; news from, 273; birthday of, 303; paroled from Army of Northern Virginia, 344n.-335n.; returns home, 348-49; difficulties on trip home, 349; leaves for Louisiana, 350; returns to Texas, 362; on Texans, 368; reports conditions at Brokenburn, 368; arrives at Brokenburn, 364; hires Negro ex-soldiers, 368; faces crop failure and overflow, 372; rents Rose Hill Plantation, 375; crop failure of, 373; tries farming, 375
- Stone, Maj. William M., 213 and n.
- Storey, Mr., 163, 170
- Storey, Lt., 286
- Street, Capt., 277, 284
- Street, Julia, *see* Julia Reed
- Sugar Creek, Mo., 93
- Surratt, John H., 333 and n.
- Swain, Mrs., 332
- Swamp Rangers, 47
- Sweet, Capt., 48
- Sweet's Artillery Co., 48, 97
- Tallulah, La., vii, xx, xxi, xxii, 12, 15, 104, 147, 367n.; Federals burn depot at, 137
- Taylor, Dr. J. Theus, 32, 175, 177
- Taylor, Mrs. J. Theus, 32
- Taylor, Col. John G., 102, 133
- Taylor, Gen. Richard, xvi, 194n., 207n., 216; surprises Federals at

- Mansfield, La., 278n; surrenders at Mobile, Ala., 342n.
- Taylor, Mrs Felix, 306
- Templeton, Mr., 150, 153, 188, 189, 190
- Templeton, Mrs., 189-90, 267, 293, 297, 299-300, 302-303, 308, 364
- Templeton, Col., 293-95, 297, 300, 304, 320, 367
- Templeton, Emma (Emmie, Em), 190, 294-95, 298ff.
- Templeton, Mary, 190, 294-95, 315
- Tennessee, xii, 83, 92 and n., 96, 143, 180, 186-87, 217, 239, 281 and n., 313n
- Tensas River, 32, 80n, 165 and n.; proposed canal into, 168n
- Tensas Swamp, 201, 365
- Texans, 213, 218, 286, 317, 319, 334
- Texas, xiv, xv, xvi, xvii, xviii, xix, 100n., 103, 104, 201, 204, 206, 214 and n., 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 223, 224, 225, 227, 228, 230, 233, 239, 241, 242, 244 and n., 246, 249, 253, 254, 255, 257, 266, 267, 269, 274, 278, 286, 288, 291, 294, 295, 300, 305, 307, 314, 321 and n., 323, 358, 363, 365; regiments from, 130; plans to go to, 189; citizens fleeing to, 191; refugees to, 194; proposed journey to, 207; slaves sent to, 209; military units from, 212 and n.; Titus, 220; Stones on way to, 220; Stones in Lamar Co., 223 and n.; Gracy Rock, 225; Tarrant, 225; Hopkins Co., 225, 358; wild flowers of, 226; climate of, 227; difficulty of life in, 227; Paris, 228, 229, 231, 223n., 242, 245, 361; Lydonia, 228 and n., 363; beaux in, 228-29; Grimes Co., 228n; Navasota, 228 and n., 238; Blue's Prairie, 229, 230; Blossom Prairie, 231-32; Liberty, 234; opinion of, 238; refugees in, 238; Jefferson, 239, 320; Marion Co., 239n.; Winnsboro, 240; Honey Grove, 240, 244; Fannin Co., 240, 244n.; Auslin, 242, 255, 356, 357; air of, 242; Charleston (milita camp), 242; life in, 243, Bonham, 244 and n., 253 n., 315; Tyler, 249ff.; Smith Co., 249n.; Quantrill in, 253 and n.; Gilmer, 255; Upshur Co., 255n.; Camp Ford, 257n.; Hempstead, 257n.; Camp Groce, 257n; invasion of, threatened, 278 and n.; Marshall, 278n., 316, 332, 343n.; San Antonio, 280, 326; Rusk, 280, 287; Cherokee Co., 280; Henderson, 288 and n., 332; Red River Co., 289 and n.; Navarro Co., 307 and n.; Quitman, 318 and n.; Houston, 321n., 361; flowers in, 326; Brazos River Valley, 327; Pittsburg, 336n.; Corsicana, 336n.; governor of, at surrender conference, 343n.; flowers in, 343-44; Kaufman Co., 355, Hockley, 357, 358, 360
- Third Brigade, Texas Volunteer Infantry, 214n.
- Thirteenth Texas Dismounted Cavalry, 212 and n.
- Thirty-first Louisiana Regt., 137
- Thompson, Mr., 175
- Tibbetts, Dr., 176
- Tibbetts, Mrs., 107, 176
- Tibbetts, Hiram, 163, 176
- Tiger Rifles, 17
- Tilghman, Gen. Lloyd, 211, 212n.
- Tooke, Mrs., 329, 330, 338, 339, 353, 355, 356, 357, 358, 361
- Trans-Mississippi Department, xiii, xvi, 341, 351; area and strength of, 174-75; to be moved, 244; headquarters in Shreveport, 257n; soldiers cannot leave, 265; headquarters in Shreveport threatened, 278n.; soldiers of, criticized, 279n; Medical Department of, in Tyler, 279n; postal division at Marshall, Tex., 284n.; Ordnance Department, 292, 348; surrender of troops in, 336n.; situation in, at end of war, 340n.; final surrender of 342n., 343n.; chaos in, after surrender, 345; siezing of government property in, 346; robbing and pillaging in, 346
- Trenton, La., 193 and n., 194, 200, 207n., 208n., 304; Stones locate near, 192; Confederate troops near, 286, 290
- Tucker, Henry, 323n.

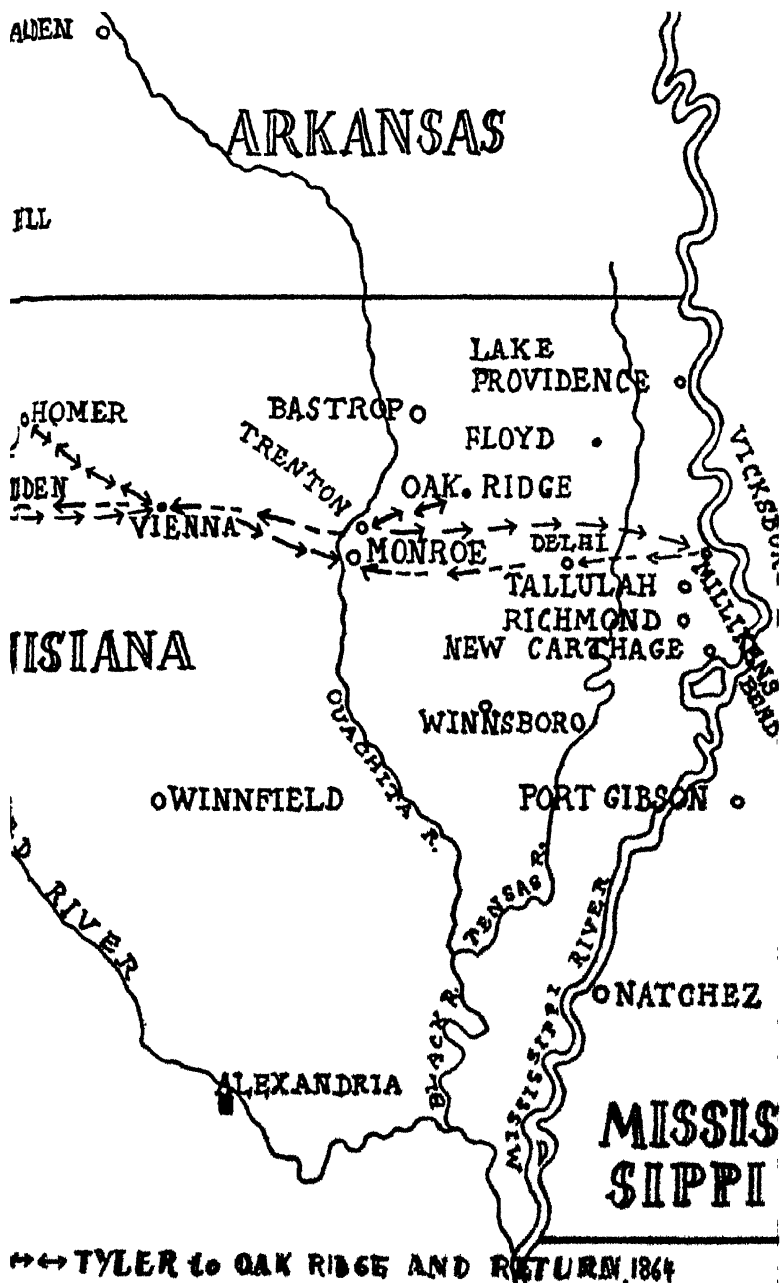
- Tupelo, Miss, 117n, 136, 319
 Turner, Mr., 114
 Twentieth Mississippi Regt., 143
 Twenty-second Texas Volunteer Infantry, 212 and n
 Twenty-eighth Mississippi Cavalry, xx, xxi, 268, 266
 Tyler, Texas, xvi, xix, 133n, 230, 235-36, 238-39, 241, 244, 248, 250-52, 254-55, 256, 258-59, 264ff., 269, 271-73, 275-76, 280, 282ff., 290-91, 293-94, 300, 306, 308-309, 310, 313-14, 316, 318, 320ff., 325-26, 328-30, 332, 335-37, 339, 342, 344-45, 347-48, 350, 352, 353ff., 362-63, 365-66; Stones move to, 249 and n.; Ordnance Depot at, 292; Stones leave, 359; Kate regrets leaving, 360
 Uncle Bob (slave), 198, 200, 202, 314n, 315, 346; pursues runaway, 171; character of, 365 66; saves valuables, 366; gives Kate money, 377
 Uncle Hooches (gardener), 10, 38, 64, 108, 153, 177, 314 and n.; secures pass, 75 and n.; drives Jersey wagon, 237-38; dies, 337
 Uncle Tom (slave), 10, 118, 119; cheats Negroes, 147
Uncle Tom's Cabin, 313n.
 Utz, Mr., 171
 Valentine, Mark, Jr. (Lt.), xxi, 18, 26-28, 40, 42, 62 64, 66, 77, 97, 105, 112-13, 115 16, 118, 140, 142, 145, 155 56, 159, 161, 164, 212, 216 17, 287, 306, 345, 372 73, 376; raises subscription of corn, 94 95; joins company, 198; resigns office, 162, 163; taken prisoner, 173; returns from prison, 215
 Valentine, Mark, Sr., xxi, 28, 42, 77, 93, 97, 104-105, 113, 141, 163 65, 172-73, 177 79, 182-83, 212, 215, 230, 233, 287, 316, 373; trouble with Negroes, 175; result of raid, 180
 Valentine, Mr. Philo, 104
 Van Dorn, Gen. Earl, 168 69, 174, 194; attacks Franklin, Tenn., 180; leaves for Tenn., 187; attacks Franklin, Tenn., 205
 Vaughn, Mr., 241, 244
 Vaughn, Mrs., 227, 235, dies, 238
 Vaughn, Bobby, 254
 Vaughn, Kitty, 238, 254
 Vicksburg, xi, xii, xv, xvi, xix, xx, xxi, 13, 16, 18, 20, 28ff., 41, 45, 46 and n., 47, 49, 52-54, 63, 68-69, 72, 80-81, 83-84, 91, 94, 96, 101, 103-104, 106ff., 112 13, 117ff., 122n., 123n., 124, 126-27, 130n., 131-32, 134, 136, 142, 144, 146 47, 149, 151-52, 154-56, 159, 162, 163, 169, 174 and n., 175, 176 and n., 178, 180 81, 186, 190n., 194n., 205n., 206 and n., 215-16, 219n., 227, 235, 248 49, 260, 264, 267, 273, 276, 290, 297n., 309, 311 12, 341, 346, 349-50, 352, 364, 370-71, 375, 377; siege of, xv, surrender of, xv; National Cemetery at, xv; fortification of, 105 and n.; refuses to surrender, 111; firing at, 114; damage of, 115; Federal canals at, 125 and n., the *Arkansas* at, 133 and n.; Federal fleet withdraws from, 135 and n.; return of Federal fleet to, 136 37, 138, 141; exchange of prisoners at, 143; Federal prisoners in, 150; ferry at, 157; preparation for attack on, 165n.; plans to bypass, 168 and n.; fortification of, 168; bombardment of, 184; Grant besieges, 211 and n., 212n.; surrender of, 229 and n., 230; loss of, 233; yellow fever epidemic at, 373
 Vienna, La., 276, 303 and n.
 Virginia, xii, xx, 12, 13, 39, 69, 105, 114, 125, 129, 132, 138, 143, 170, 180, 213 and n., 225, 233, 264, 273, 284, 316, 323, 341n., 343
 Volunteer Southrons [*sic*], xx, 16, 20, 71
 Waddell, Dr., 168
 Waddell, Mrs., 219
 Wadley, family, 235, 249
 Wadley, Mr. (Col.), 203, 220, 227

- Wadley, Mrs., 203, 212-13, 215, 219-20, 233, 305, 366
 Wadley, Loring, 205
 Wadley, Mary, 210
 Wadley, Sarah, 210, 219, 224, 235, 255, 265, 288, 305, 325, 332
 Wadley, William, 208, 215, 218, 219, 305
 Walker, Gen. John G., xv, 102n, 207 and n., 208n., 212 and n., 244n., 343n.; staff of, 213 and n.; biography of, 213n.-14n.; movement of division of, 217n., battle of Milliken's Bend, 218n.; in Monroe, 235; captures Negro soldiers, 239n; division moves to Ark., 295 and n.
 Walker, Dr and Mrs, 339
 Walker, Mr., 114
 Waller, Capt., 344, 348, 351
 Walnut Hill, Ark., 224
 Warren County, Miss, 20, 376
 Warrenton, Miss, 108, 114
 Washington, D. C., 57, 58, 297-98, 341 and n.; rumors of capture, 230
 Watson, Mr., 173
 Webster (dining room servant), 10, 19, 22, 28, 33, 42, 67, 91, 103-104, 130, 152, 159, 162, 166, 183, 197-98, 203; care of mistress, 46; claims Brokenburn, 193; deserts Stones, 199; joins Federal Army, 208
 Weir, Dr., 312, 315, 318-20, 322, 325, 328, 330, 332
 Wells, Mrs., 266, 285, 328, 336, 343
 Wesley (body servant), 17, 18, 56, 174; separated from My Brother, 349
 West, Lou (Mrs. Schultz), death of, 63
Whig (Vicksburg), 14 and n., 35, 39, 85, 98, 111, 115, 117, 146
 White, Mr., 52
 White, Mrs., 233, 234, 239
 White, Capt., 136, 377
 Whitmore, Lou, 130, 132
 Wilderness, Va., 308
 Wilkinson, Mr. (tutor), 62, 71ff., 79, 83
 Williams, Mr., 132, 250, 258, 307, 322
 Williams, Capt., 348
 Williams, Gen Thomas, digs canal at Vicksburg, 125n.
 Williams, Lt., 61
 Williams, M. C., 51
 Williamsburg, Va., 116-17
 Willow Bayou, La., 32, 50, 55n., 58, 70, 72, 92, 124, 168n., 177
 Wilmington, N. C., surrender of, 331
 Wilson, Col. William, 60 and n.
 Wilson, Julia, 215, 217
 Winchester, Va., 39, 114
 Winn, Dr., 334
 Winn, Mrs., 369, 370, 371
 Winnfield, La., 170
 Wonka (Kate's horse), 19, 53, 67, 72, 154, 166, 208n; taken by Yankees, 182-83
 Wright, Col., 166
 Wylie, Capt. Jack, 295, 300ff., 310, 315, 320, 332, 360
 Wylie, Dr., 267, 270, 273, 302
 Wylie, Mr. W., 160, 233, 300
 Yankees, xiv, xvi, xvii, 44, 84-85, 91, 93, 100, 103, 111-12, 115, 119, 122, 124ff., 132, 134ff., 145, 148, 150, 154, 160, 163, 165-66, 168-70, 172ff., 190 and n., 191, 193, 197ff., 208-10, 217-18, 224, 232-34, 239-40, 242-43, 249, 257-58, 265, 269, 273, 277-78, 283-84, 290, 296-98, 300-301, 313-15, 320, 324-25, 331, 339-41, 348, 351-53, 357, 363-64, 366-67, 370
 Yazoo City, Miss., xxi, 102, 133n.
 Yohola, Opothele, 83
 Yorktown, Va., 102, 103, 115-16
 Young, Dr., 32, 194, 200, 205, 212, 215
 Young, Mrs., 214, 216
 Young, Alice, 214
 Young, Carrie, 203, 215
 Young's Point, La., 168n.; Federal gunboats at, 159; Federal troops at, 177 and n.
 Zollicoffer, Gen. Felix Kirk, 85 and n.
 Zouaves (New Orleans), 17



JOURNEYS OF KATE STONE~

← -- ← BROKENBURN to LAMAR COUNTY, 1863



→→ TYLER to OAK RIDGE AND RETURN 1864